



# A National Survey on the Qualifications of Religious Education Teachers of Aotearoa, New Zealand

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study covered 1,460 teachers in Catholic schools from the dioceses of Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Wellington, comprising approximately 37% of total teachers in Catholic Schools. Teachers of religious education make up 89% of the total respondents.

Salient points of the study reveal:

- Approximately 42% of teachers in Catholic schools are handling Religious Education
- An average of 41% all staff Catholic Schools including Principals, DRS and teachers in Religious Education have qualification in RE and/or Theology.
- TCI has been named as the educational provider where most respondents have earned their qualifications.
- The top 4 types of disciplines completed by respondents are: *Religious Education, Catechetical Studies, Religious Studies and Educational Leadership*
- The Level of NCRS Certification commonly completed is *Graduate Level*, followed respectively by *Classroom RE-Teaching* then by *Leadership Level*
- The top 3 perceived key advantages in obtaining qualifications for RE and theology are: *Deeper understanding of Catholic faith, Greater confidence in teaching RE and Increased ability to explain Catholic faith to students/pupils*, respectively.
- Four out of six dioceses perceive RE/Theological Qualification to teaching RE and School's Special Character as *Somewhat Important*.
- The top 6 roles identified as *Very Important* in supporting the aim of enabling an on-going encounter with Jesus Christ are:
  - *DRS, Principal, Local Parish Priest/ Deacon, RE Teachers, Parents and BOT* respectively for primary schools.
  - *DRS, Principal, RE Teachers, Chaplain, BOT and Local Parish Priest/Deacon* respectively for secondary schools.
- The majority choice for appropriate level of RE/Theological Qualifications for Principals, DRS and RE Teachers are:
  - For Primary
    - A *Certificate* for RE Teachers Yrs. 1-8
    - A *Diploma* for the DRS
    - A *Diploma* for the Principal
  - For Secondary
    - A *Certificate* for RE Teachers Yrs. 1-8
    - A *Certificate* for RE Teachers Yrs. 9-10
    - A *Diploma* for RE Teachers Yrs. 11-13
    - A *Bachelor* for the DRS
    - A *Diploma* or Masters for the Principal

- The six most frequently suggested assistance considered necessary to achieve qualifications was Time-off Teaching, followed by ensuring courses have a high level of relevance to the RE Curriculum and Teaching – this includes sympathetic course scheduling; identifiable connection to RE curriculum content; high quality of lecturers; less assessment; simpler assignments. Accessibility in terms of local delivery can also be included here. The third suggestion was Financial Support – including scholarships; the covering of travel costs; paid leave and financial incentives after finishing the qualification. Fourth most common answer was No Help Needed – primarily because the respondents were: not interested in enrolling; felt that there was no need to hold RE or Theology qualifications; were tired and about to retire; or were currently enrolled in and completing a degree course. In the Feedback to TCI sections, comments included the burden and stress of teachers; confusion around the questions being asked; concerns regarding the implications of the survey perceived as checking up on the teachers' work; and statements around the need to consider experience and witness rather than qualifications. Finally, the sixth group of most cited suggestions centred on information on courses – including receiving information by email; not knowing admission requirements and duration of courses. Suggestions on career-path options could also be included under this category
  
- Curriculum and Teaching data suggest the following for any TCI offered qualifications :
  - Assignments which are simple, not too time consuming to complete and which can be used in classroom teaching;
  - Credible and engaging lecturers;
  - Papers which are both interesting and relevant to classroom teaching;
  - Papers delivered as locally as possible, and so can be completed without having to travel far;
  - Papers that can be embedded in the school's professional development programme;
  - Papers that can be undertaken in peer groups, and/or with work/school colleagues

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The study was commissioned by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) and designed to provide a benchmark for the qualification status of teachers of Religious Education in Catholic Schools. This was considered a first step in creating a baseline-reference for future policy initiatives from the NZCBC and strategic initiatives from The Catholic Institute (TCI). This study would also be a valuable reference document for professional development providers within the education and schools sector of the New Zealand Church.

The fundamental value of this baseline-reference is to assess the level and promote the value of Religious Education qualifications as an integral component of the Special Character of our Catholic Schools. TCI was tasked with conducting the study.

### 2.0 RESEARCH CONTEXT

Catholic schools comprise 12.66 % of all schools in NZ (CTMES Sector Report, 2014; van der Nest, and Buchanan, 2014). These schools represent a significant sector within the New Zealand education system. The significance is further underscored by Catholic schools being consistently recognised for not only providing quality education but also for providing the most cohesive and purposeful education in the sector. This was acknowledged at the recent New Zealand Catholic Education Conference in June 2015 ([http://nzceo.catholic.org.nz/pages/events/events\\_convention.html](http://nzceo.catholic.org.nz/pages/events/events_convention.html)).

However, Catholic education on a global scale faces serious challenges, which are reflected in the New Zealand context. Grace (2009) presents the following 10 challenges confronting Catholic schools in the contemporary Western world:

1. The impact of secularisation upon the work of Catholic education
2. The influence of global capitalism and its associated material values
3. The authenticity of the mission integrity of Catholic schools that, first and foremost, the Church offers its educational services to the poor
4. Issues of faith formation for both teachers and students
5. Moral and social formation in changing cultural situations
6. Maintaining the educational mission as religious congregations declined in numbers
7. Problems of recruitment, formation and retention of school leaders and teachers in Catholic education
8. Responding to changing expectations for the education of girls and women
9. Understanding contemporary students' attitudes towards, and experience of, Catholic schooling
10. The finance, economics of schooling and politics of schools (Church-state relations) in various societies

These challenges require an evaluation of the leadership of Catholic schools and school-systems. Of key interest here is the development of teachers, which is identified in both current literature and contemporary practice as a critical element to assist in meeting the challenge of transforming school culture and supporting student learning.

It is within this framework that the following study is situated, and it is hoped this study will assist educational agencies of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand in shaping policies and programmes that will promote Religious Education qualifications as an integral component of the Special Character of our Catholic Schools.

### 3.0 BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A report from the NZCEO on “Teachers’ Professional Development and Qualifications in Religious Education and Catholic Character” (2014) reveals a significant number of Catholic teachers are under qualified to teach Religious Education and have instead relied heavily on the professional development offered within their schools.

*The development of a well-qualified teaching force is central to the Bishops’ vision for Catholic schools. While much good work is being done in professional development, significant numbers of teachers remain underqualified to teach Religious Education. Further, it seems that most Boards of Trustees and school leaders do not plan for the development of staff qualifications in this area, and do not strategically make funding available for study.*

The primary reason for the discrepancy between qualifications and development was the difficulty schools (and BOT’s) have in distinguishing how much funding goes into general teacher development and how much is allocated for teachers’ formation in Catholic special character and/or qualifications in religious education. This has resulted in inconsistent professional development plans in Religious Education for most Catholic Schools.

Additionally, other studies within the New Zealand context reflect the challenge schools have allocating funds to the development of the Catholic special character, noting this hinges largely on the support of school leadership (NZCEO, Cullinane, 2007, van der Nest, and Buchanan, 2014, Filipo, 2002, Collins, 2003, 2004, 2005, Neven and Thompson, 2011, O’Donnell, 1999).

The broader literature on Catholic education suggests that the challenge of promoting and enabling the principles of Catholic Special Character within the whole school staff is a global problem for the Church as a whole (Grace, 2009).

### 4.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

There were two mutually exclusive areas identified as needing research, namely: the level and number of Religious Education qualifications of teachers; and the qualifications offered by TCI. Based on these broad areas, specific objectives were drafted. However, in the course of the study, the researchers discovered that there is some base-line data needed that was not currently present. This base-line data was collected after the survey and factored into the results of the study.

Below is the final set of research objectives that directed the study:

Area 1: Current level of qualifications of teachers of religious education

- a) Provide a baseline of the number of teachers (head count) in Catholic Schools per Diocese
- b) Determine the number of teachers involved with Religious Education

Area 2: Perspective of teachers towards qualifications in Religious Education and Theology

- c) Determine the level of qualifications of teachers teaching RE including Principals and DRS
- d) Identify challenges faced by teachers in gaining qualifications
- e) Identify help and support needed from TCI to encourage teachers to gain qualifications<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this survey the use of the words '*qualified*' and '*qualification/s*' will be used to refer to qualifications in the area of Theology and Religious Education



## CHAPTER TWO

### RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 5.0 METHODOLOGY

The research is basically a *Descriptive Study*, which is normally employed to profile a particular population or as a means of scoping a particular environment.

6.0 METHOD – The study gathered a mixed set of data, both quantitative and qualitative, generated solely through a survey questionnaire distributed through online software called *SURVEY MONKEY*.

6.1 TOOL DEVELOPMENT – The survey questionnaire was drafted by a team from NCRS in consultation with other TCI National staff, some Religious Education Advisors, teachers, and a principal.

6.2 DATA ANALYSIS – Results from Survey Monkey were downloaded for processing. Although Survey Monkey has a feature in data analysis and was used in the first draft of the research report, it was incapable of discriminating results across items. Thus the original generation resulted in a report that was indistinct and too broad to generate a robust baseline. The raw data in excel format was then downloaded and re-analysed. Each diocese was treated as a separate case, from which a cross-case analysis of all dioceses was made to generate the national findings.

6.2.1 *Quantitative Data* – These were analysed through frequency count (Microsoft Excel). Duplicate entries and void entries were eliminated. Entries which were inconsistent and inappropriately coded were rectified. Data was also sorted according to questions items.

6.2.2 *Qualitative Data* – Answers to open-ended questions were content-analysed using the coding and categorizing data analytic procedure prescribed by Strauss & Corbin's (1998) grounded theory. This consists in coding each answer into themes that capture the essence of the entry. Codes were either generated using the words of the respondents (NVivo) or generated by the researcher. Similar codes were then coalesced into categories which were presented as dimensions of the answers to the questions.

#### 6.3 SCOPE and LIMITATIONS

A statistical Confidence Level of 95% is usually required for studies which do not affect human life and death. Studies in the medical and healthcare field require the steeper confidence level of 99% and beyond. So for this study a 95% Confidence Level is the ideal, resulting in a Confidence Interval of 5. Thus, to determine the level of confidence the study was able to achieve based on the number of respondents, the researchers considered the figures for both participating schools and the total number of teachers in Catholic Schools.

The study was unable to rely on existing figures for the total population of teachers in Catholic schools across New Zealand or the total number of teachers in Religious Education for 2 reasons: most of the available figures were based on workload instead of headcount evidencing that a range of parameters had been used to calculate teacher numbers; and no one organisation was able to provide national figures. In light of this, the research team decided to poll the total number of teachers in Catholic schools through email. The majority of the schools responded generously. This was followed up by a second communication to those who did not respond and a third to capture the last few schools. The research team ended the poll after the 3<sup>rd</sup> communication, respecting the decision of the small number of schools to withhold their information. Accordingly, this study has worked on a total of 4,101 teachers in Catholic Schools with a total number of 1,740 teachers involved with teaching Religious Education.

Below are the number of schools (n1) and participants (n2) and the corresponding level of confidence they have achieved. This was computed using an online statistical calculator <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>

<b>DIOCESE</b>	<b>n1</b>	<b>α1</b>	<b>n2</b>	<b>α 2</b>
AKL	51	95%	307	95%
CHCH	33	99%	226	95%
DN	24	99%	179	95%
HM	31	95%	230	90%
PN	33	80%	199	90%
WLG	42	95%	254	95%
<b>AVE</b>		<b>94%</b>		<b>93%</b>

Note: n1 = minimum number of schools needed to achieve a Confidence Level ( $\alpha$ ) of 95%. n2 = minimum number of teachers needed to achieve a Confidence Level ( $\alpha$ ) of 95%.  $\alpha 1$  = Confidence Level achieved from actual sample size of schools; and  $\alpha 2$  = Confidence Level achieved by actual sample size of teachers.

6.3.1 Gathered per diocese, Auckland and Wellington met the minimum required sample size for a 95% Confidence Level. The rest of the dioceses have achieved within the 95% to 99% Confidence Level. The national average is 94%. The exception to this is Palmerston North, where 83% of its schools participated in the study, achieving a Confidence Level of 80%.

6.3.2 Headcount on the number of teachers in Catholic Schools and those teaching Religious Education is incomplete across Dioceses with a total 32 schools (6% of the total number of Catholic schools in New Zealand) not submitting their total numbers (Auckland = 7, Christchurch = 2, Dunedin = 2, Hamilton = 6, Palmerston North = 11, Wellington = 4).

6.3.3 For the number of teachers, Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington have sample sizes for both number of schools and number of teachers that meets the 95% Confidence Level. Hamilton and Palmerston North have achieved a sample size within the 90% Confidence Level. The national average is 93%.

6.3.4 The survey tool was not pre-tested for reliability and validity and used an online facility to distribute the survey.

6.3.5 Issues encountered in the questionnaires are as follows:

6.3.5.1 Although the researchers were able to sift through double entries which are discernible by such indicators as positions and sign in or registration, it is possible that some entries did not follow a uniform pattern – e.g. it is possible that some respondents have registered, left the survey before finishing the questionnaire and then re-entered the survey. This was spotted with one DRS who registered three times, and it is possible this could have occurred with a less recognisable respondent.

6.3.5.2 Question 6 asked respondents about their positions and they were given the option to select as many positions as possible. This was problematic as the study intended to determine the positions of the respondents rather than how many roles they play in the school.

6.3.5.3 In Question 7, people who answered “Others” put in answers such as *Understanding Sexuality*. Furthermore, some of those who indicated “Others” indicated that they are part way through a qualification (Question 10). Perhaps Question 10 should have been asked earlier than Question 7.

6.3.5.4 Questions in 17, 18 and 19 were leading questions.

6.3.5.5 In Question 19, Years 7-8 were classified under Primary Schools, but in reality they teach in a secondary environment, thus, they were not given the chance to rank the roles which apply to them.

6.3.5.6 Wordings of rank choices for Questions 17, 18 and 19 should have been uniform to avoid confusion.

6.3.5.7 In the open ended questions some participants commented that such questions are best answered face-to-face rather than online.

6.3.6 The researchers have positioned the Confidence Level (95%) of this survey based on the above analyses and consideration the following:

6.3.6.1 The required sample size for a projected population of *Total Number of Teachers* for this survey is 354. The survey was able to gather 1,460 participants, which is substantially above the required sample size.

6.3.6.2 The ideal number of participating schools is 147; the survey involved 221 participant schools.

6.3.6.3 Confidence that this is enough to offset the variances across diocese and inadequacies in the survey instrument.

6.3.6.4 The historical perception equating NCRS certification with qualification, led to the separation of questions around the level of NCRS certification from questions on qualifications.

#### **NCRS certification levels**

1. The level of NCRS Certification most commonly completed is *Graduate Level*, followed respectively by *Classroom RE-Teaching* then by *Leadership Level* (Table 12).  
Note: Table 12 is located at the end of the tables. It is has been extracted from the responses relating to qualifications to emphasis the essential difference between formal qualifications and professional currency.

## CHAPTER THREE

### NATIONAL FINDINGS

#### A. Profile of Respondents

2. A total of 221 schools participated in the survey, comprising 94% of all Catholic Schools in New Zealand (Table 1).
3. A total of 1,460 teachers participated in the survey, equating to approximately 37% of the total teachers in NZ Catholic Schools (Table 1).
4. Approximately 42% of teachers in Catholic Schools are working in Religious Education (Table 1).
5. An estimated average of 72% of the total RE teachers in Catholic Schools in New Zealand participated in the survey (excluding Palmerston North - Table 2).
6. An average of 69% of Principals and 81% of all DRS' across dioceses participated in the survey (Table 2).

#### B. Qualifications of Respondents (Table 3)

7. An average of 39.5% of all Principals is qualified in RE/Theology.
8. 51% of all the DRS' are qualified in RE/Theology.
9. An average of 37% of the Senior Managers who participated in the survey is qualified in RE/Theology.
10. An average of 35% of the RE Teachers who participated in the survey are qualified in RE/Theology.
11. The national average number of RE/Theology qualified staff is 41% (Table 3).
12. Numbers of respondents claiming to have achieved RE/Theological qualifications:

Doctorate	2
Masters	58
Graduate Diploma	103
Bachelors	33
Certificate in Catechetical Studies	119
Diploma	18
Others	155

- 12.1 The majority of respondents claim to have finished "other" qualifications.
- 12.2 There are two teachers with Doctoral qualifications.
13. The top 3 types of disciplines completed by respondents are: *Religious Education, and Catechetical Studies, with Religious Studies, Educational Leadership and Theology* in Rank 3 (Table 5).

14. Most of those who declared that they are qualified in RE/Theology completed their qualification in the period 2000-2009 (Table 6).
15. There are 97 respondents who declared that they are currently studying toward a qualification in RE/Theology (Table 7).
  - 15.1 The top 4 disciplines in which study is being undertaken are: *Religious Education, Educational Leadership, Scripture, Theology and Religious Studies* (latter two both ranked 4<sup>th</sup> - Table 8).
16. 178 teachers declared that they had completed a paper but have not completed a qualification (Table 9).
17. *TCI* was named as the educational provider with which most respondents earned their qualification. 'Other providers' followed and included: Good Shepherd College, Seminary, Wellington Catholic Education, Teacher Training Colleges and reference to previous work experiences (Table 10).
18. *Introduction to Theology, Introduction to Old and New Testament* are the most commonly selected TCI papers across all dioceses. Second most popular is *Understanding Sexuality* (Table 11).

### C. Levels and Perceptions of Qualifications

- The top 3 perceived key advantages in obtaining qualifications for RE and theology are: Deeper understanding of Catholic faith, Greater confidence in teaching RE and Increased ability to explain Catholic faith to students/pupils, respectively (Table 13).
19. 4 Dioceses perceive RE/Theological Qualification to teaching RE and School's Special Character as *Somewhat Important*, while 2 Dioceses perceive it as *Very Important* (Table 14).
  20. The top 6 roles identified as *Very Important* in supporting the aim of enabling an on-going encounter with Jesus Christ are (in ranked order):
    - a. *DRS, Principal, Local Parish Priest/Deacon, RE Teachers, Parents* and *BOT* for primary schools (Table 15a).
    - b. *DRS, Principal, RE Teachers, Chaplain, BOT* and *Local Parish Priest/Deacon* for secondary schools (Table 15b).
  21. The most popular choices for the appropriate level of RE/Theological Qualifications for Principals, DRS and RE Teachers are:
    - a. For Primary
      - i. A *Certificate* for RE Teachers Yrs. 1-8
      - ii. A *Diploma* for the DRS
      - iii. A *Diploma* for the Principal

- b. For Secondary
  - i. A *Certificate* for RE Teachers Yrs. 1-8
  - ii. A *Certificate* for RE Teachers Yrs. 9-10
  - iii. A *Diploma* for RE Teachers Yrs. 11-13
  - iv. A *Bachelor* for the DRS
  - v. A *Diploma* or Masters for the Principal

#### **D. Suggestions for TCI Program Offerings**

22. The most frequently suggested assistance considered necessary to achieve qualifications was Time-off Teaching, followed by ensuring courses have a high level of relevance to the RE Curriculum and Teaching – this includes sympathetic course scheduling; identifiable connection to RE curriculum content; high quality of lecturers; less assessment; simpler assignments. Accessibility in terms of local delivery can also be included here. The third suggestion was Financial Support – including scholarships; the covering of travel costs; paid leave and financial incentives after finishing the qualification. Fourth most common answer was No Help Needed – primarily because the respondents were: not interested in enrolling; felt that there was no need to hold RE or Theology qualifications; were tired and about to retire; or were currently enrolled in and completing a degree course. In the Feedback to TCI sections, comments included the burden and stress of teachers; confusion around the questions being asked; concerns regarding the implications of the survey perceived as checking up on the teachers' work; and statements around the need to consider experience and witness rather than qualifications. Finally, the sixth group of most cited suggestions centred on information on courses – including receiving information by email; not knowing admission requirements and duration of courses. Suggestions on career-path options could also be included under this category (Table 17).
23. Curriculum and Teaching data suggest the following aspects be a focus for any TCI offered qualifications (based on Qualitative Data Analysis).
- a. Assignments which are simple, not too time consuming to answer and one which can be used in classroom teaching
  - b. Credible and engaging lecturers
  - c. Papers which are interesting and relevant to classroom teaching
  - d. Preferably delivered within local or region, or could be done within one's locality without having to travel far
  - e. Preferably embedded in the school's professional development
  - f. Preferably taken with peers and work/school colleagues
24. The top 3 identified areas of difficulties in making the next-step towards RE/Theological qualifications are *Time*, *Cost* and *Accessibility of Course* (which are both ranked 2 - Table 18).
25. When respondents were asked for suggestions on the RE/Theological qualifications TCI could offer, the most frequent response was "*Don't know*", "*don't know the options*" and "*not sure*". This could mean that many teachers are not aware of what qualifications are expected; what qualifications they can take and/or what TCI can and does offer. For those

who had an answer, the most preferred qualification is the *Diploma*, followed by the *Certificate*, then *Masters*. Some suggested that cross-crediting should be considered along with ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to teaching, recognised by the NZQA, embedded in the Professional Development of the school and delivered within specified styles of teaching. Here, some also suggested specific papers in the areas of theology, religious education and spirituality. Additional feedback expressed the stress and burden of teachers, respondents' impressions of TCI's lecturers, curriculum and respondents' assumed intention of the survey (Table 19).

26. Demand for the *Bachelors*, *Certificate*, *Diploma* and *Masters* qualifications comes mostly from within Auckland, while generally speaking other Dioceses preferred *Specific Papers*. However, this finding may reflect what has been available historically as well as the greater number of responses from Auckland. (Table 19).
27. The top 3 most preferred modes of teaching are: *3 or 4-day seminar*, *Online* and *Face-to-face*, in ranked order.
28. The last question focused on other assistance needed from TCI to enable a next step RE/Theological qualification. Many did not answer the question or indicated "*None*"; this may reflect the assumption that answers have been covered in question 23, and could also indicate teachers are not aware of what is expected or what qualifications are on offer. This further supports the need for more information. The "*NA/None*" responses included suggestions on the Curriculum and Teaching similar to previous responses, feedback to TCI on the burden of the teachers and some additional feedback on TCI courses already completed. Feedback to TCI varies from diocese to diocese.



## NATIONAL CASE REPORT

### List of Tables

**Table 1:** School and Teacher Participation

DIOCESE	# Participant Schools	Total # of Schools	% of Participating Schools/Total Schools per Diocese	#Teacher Participants	Total # of Teachers per Diocese	% of Total Respondents/ Total Number of Teachers in the Diocese	Total # of RE Teachers	%age of RE Teachers to Total # of Teachers
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>94% (Average)</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>4,101</b>	<b>37% (Average)</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>42%</b>

**Table 2:** Percentage of Principals; DRS' & RE Teachers participating in the survey

DIOCESE	PRINCIPAL	DRS	Respondent RE Teachers to Total RE Teachers	Respondent RE Teachers to Total Survey Respondents
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>89%</b>

**Table 3:** Percentage of qualified Principals, DRS', Senior Managers and RE Teachers

DIOCESE	PRINCIPAL	DRS	SENIOR MGT	RE TEACHERS	ACROSS STAFF AVERAGE	RANK
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>39.5%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>*41%</b>	

Notes: 1) Percentage for Principals and DRSs are from total number of schools in the diocese; 2) Percentage for Senior Management and DRS are from total number of participating school managers. \*Average across Diocese.

**Table 4:** Positions and levels of achieved qualification

DIOCESE	Doctorate	Masters	Graduate Diploma	Bachelors	Certificate in Catechetical St	Diploma	Specific Papers	Others
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>155</b>

**Table 5:** Top 3 disciplines of completed qualifications

DISCIPLINE	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL/# DioResp
Catechetical Studies	2	2	1	2	2	1	1.7
Theology	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Religious Education	1	1	2	1	1	2	1.3
Scripture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Educational Leadership	0	3	0	0	3	0	3
Religious Studies	3	0	0	3	0	3	3
Pastoral Ministry	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses

**Table 6:** Date of completion for those who declared that they have completed qualifications

DIOCESE	2010-2014	2000-2009	Before 2009
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>151</b>

**Table 7:** Number of teachers currently studying toward a qualification

DIOCESE	(YES)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>

**Table 8:** Top 3 disciplines of those who are currently studying toward qualifications

DISCIPLINE	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL/# DioResp
Catechetical Studies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Theology	3	0	2	0	0	0	2.5
Religious Education	1	1	1	1	1	3	1.3
Scripture	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Educational Leadership	2	0	0	2	2	1	1.75
Religious Studies	0	2	3	3	0	2	2.5
Pastoral Ministry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses

**Table 9:** Number of teachers who have completed a paper but have not yet completed a qualification

DIOCESE	(YES)
TOTAL	178

**Table 10:** Providers of qualifications for Theology and Religious Education

DIOCESE	TCI	University	Diocese	Other countries	Others	No mention of provider
TOTAL	292	63	4	12	84	101

**Table 11:** TCI Papers most commonly taken per diocese

NO. OF DIOCESE	COURSE TITLES
All 6	Theology, Introduction to Old & New Testament
In 5	Understanding Sexuality
In at least 4	Introduction to Catholicism, Understanding Church
In at least 3	Understanding Church
In at least 2	Catholic Social Teaching, Masters in ACU, Reformation, Synoptic Gospels, TH206a/RE200, SC101 and SC102, Spirituality for Teachers

**Table 13:** Top 3 perceived key advantages in obtaining qualifications for RE and Theology

Key Advantages	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL/# DioResp	RANK
Deeper understanding of Catholic faith	1	1	1	2	2	3	1.7	1
Greater confidence in teaching RE	3	3	0	3	3	2	2.8	2
Greater opportunity for career development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Personal challenge to reflect on my faith	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	
Ability to assist in the mission of the Church	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Increased ability to explain Catholic faith to students/pupils	2	2	3	1	1	1	1.7	1
I don't think there are any significant advantages	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses

**Table 14:** Perception of importance of RE/Theological Qualification to teaching RE and School's Catholic Character

<b>DIOCESE</b>	<b>TEACHING RE</b>	<b>SCHOOL's CATHOLIC CHARACTER</b>
AKL	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Very Important</i>
CHCH	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>
DN	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>
HM	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Very Important</i>
PN	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>
WLG	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<i>Somewhat Important</i>

**Table 15a:** Top 3 roles chosen as Very Important (VI) in supporting the aim of enabling an on-going encounter with Jesus Christ - PRIMARY

<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>	<b>AKL</b>	<b>CHCH</b>	<b>DN</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>PN</b>	<b>WLG</b>	<b>TOTAL/# DioResp</b>	<b>RANK</b>
RE Teachers	3	4	3	3	3	3	3.2	<b>4</b>
Non RE Classroom	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Principal	2	3	0	2	2	2	2.2	<b>2</b>
DRS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	<b>1</b>
S65 Tagged	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Dean	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Counsellor	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Support Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Chaplain	0	0	2	0	0	0	NC	
Parents	5	5	4	0	4	4	4.4	<b>5</b>
BOT	0	0	5	5	5	5	5	<b>6</b>
Local Parishioners	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Local Parish Priest/Deacon	4	2	2	4	0	0	3	<b>3</b>
Local Diocese	0	0	0	0	0	0		

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses. The 2 rank given by CHCH to the Chaplain was not considered in the national count.

**Table 15b:** Top 3 roles chosen as Very Important (VI) in supporting the aim of enabling an on-going encounter with Jesus Christ - SECONDARY

<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b>	<b>AKL</b>	<b>CHCH</b>	<b>DN</b>	<b>HM</b>	<b>PN</b>	<b>WLG</b>	<b>TOTAL/# DioResp</b>	<b>RANK</b>
RE Teachers	3	4	2	2	2	3	2.7	<b>3</b>
Non RE Classroom	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Principal	2	2	2	2	1	2	1.8	<b>2</b>
DRS	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	<b>1</b>
S65 Tagged	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Dean	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Counsellor	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Support Staff	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Chaplain	0	3	3	4	0	4	3.5	<b>4</b>
Parents	4	5	0	0	3	4		
BOT	5	0	4	5	5	4	3.8	<b>5</b>
Local Parishioners	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Local Parish Priest/Deacon	0	5	3	3	4	5	4	<b>6</b>
Local Diocese	0	0	0	0	4	0	NC	

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses.

**Table 16a:** Top choice for appropriate level of RE/Theological Qualifications for Principals, DRS and RE Teachers - PRIMARY

ROLES	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	Majority
RE Teacher Yrs 1-8	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	<b>Certificate</b>
RE Teacher Yrs 9-10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RE Teacher Yrs 11-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DRS	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	<b>Diploma</b>
PRINCIPAL	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Certificate	Diploma	<b>Diploma</b>

**Table 16b:** Top choice for appropriate level of RE/Theological Qualifications for Principals, DRS and RE Teachers - SECONDARY

ROLES	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	Majority
RE Teacher Yrs 1-8	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	No Qualifications	Certificate	<b>Certificate</b>
RE Teacher Yrs 9-10	Certificate	Diploma	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	Certificate	<b>Certificate</b>
RE Teacher Yrs 11-13	Bachelors	Diploma	Certificate & Diploma	Diploma	Diploma	Bachelor	<b>Diploma</b>
DRS	Bachelor	Masters	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	Bachelor	<b>Bachelor</b>
PRINCIPAL	Diploma	Masters	Certificate	Diploma	Bachelors	Masters	<b>Diploma Masters</b>

**Table 17:** Next-step help needed towards a RE/Theological qualification (open-ended)

ANSWERS	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL	RANK
Time-off teaching	155	57	39	55	54	93	453	<b>1</b>
Financial support	95	17	16	28	11	40	207	<b>3</b>
Curriculum & Teaching	46	62	23	37	32	55	255	<b>2</b>
Accessibility	35	24	5	24	10	7	105	
Information on courses	33	7	13	4	11	16	84	<b>6</b>
School support	25	3	2	1	2	19	52	
Peer support	12	2	11	10	6	12	53	
Clarifying career path	11	0	0	0	0	0	11	
Personal motivation	10	1	0	0	2	1	14	
Feedback to TCI	8	12	12	13	17	34	96	<b>5</b>
Permanent job in CS	5	1	0	0	2	0	8	
Not interested/not needed	32	12	8	13	16	21	102	<b>4</b>
Not sure	4	0	0	1	1	5	11	
No answer	9	3	3	3	2	3	23	
Others	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	

**Table 18:** Top 3 identified areas of difficulty in making the next-step towards RE/Theological qualifications

DIFFICULTY	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL/# DioResp	RANK
Time	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	<b>1</b>
Cost	2	3	3	2	3	2	2.5	<b>2</b>
Motivation								
Accessibility of courses	3	2	2	3	2	3	2.5	<b>2</b>
Others								
NA								

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses.

**Table 19:** Suggestions for RE/Theological qualifications to be offered by TCI (open-ended)

SUGGESTIONS	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL	RANK
Bachelors	16	6	6	5	4	3	40	<b>8</b>
Certificate	28	6	5	12	16	8	75	<b>5</b>
Diploma	37	7	15	12	11	22	104	<b>3</b>
Graduate diploma	5	0	1	0	0	0	6	<b>11</b>
Postgraduate	5	0	0	1	0	12	18	<b>10</b>
Masters	32	9	5	6	2	2	56	<b>6</b>
Doctoral	3	3	1	5	2	12	26	<b>9</b>
General	16	18	10	12	19	19	94	<b>4</b>
Specific papers	40	16	9	18	16	32	131	<b>2</b>
Feedback to TCI	12	11	0	17	11	43	94	<b>4</b>
Don't know/ don't know options/ not sure	74	10	22	14	17	26	163	<b>1</b>
Not needed	9	8	7	7	4	9	44	<b>7</b>
No answer/None	33	15	6	12	14	14	94	<b>4</b>

**Table 20:** Top 3 ranked most preferred modes of teaching

MODE	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL/# DioResp	RANK
Face-to-face	3	3	0	2	3	3	2.8	<b>3</b>
3 or 4 day seminar	1	2	2	1	1	1	1.3	<b>1</b>
Distance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Online	2	1	1	3	2	2	1.8	<b>2</b>
None-I feel I'm already adequate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Note: Total / # DioResp = Total divided by number of diocesan responses.

**Table 21:** Any other way TCI might assist enrolment for a next step RE/Theological qualification (open-ended)

HELP NEEDED	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL	RANK
Information on courses	31	3	9	8	9	11	71	<b>4</b>
Financial assistance	23	7	3	7	5	11	56	<b>5</b>
Feedback to TCI	21	13	15	7	15	17	88	<b>3</b>
Curriculum and Teaching	25	20	13	16	13	24	111	<b>2</b>
Time-off teaching	16	5	4	5	4	8	42	<b>7</b>
Career-pathing	8	0	0	0	0	0	8	<b>9</b>
School support	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	<b>10</b>
Not sure	9	2	2	0	11	5	29	<b>8</b>
Not needed	2	23	8	6	0	6	45	<b>6</b>
NA or None	70	4	7	23	33	38	175	<b>1</b>

**Table 12:** Current level of NCRS Certification

LEVELS	AKL	CHCH	DN	HM	PN	WLG	TOTAL/# DioResp	RANK
Foundation	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	<b>5</b>
Classroom Catholic Character	0	0	0	0		0	0	
Classroom RE Teaching	2	3	2	2	2	2	2.2	<b>2</b>
Leadership Level	3	2	3	3	3	3	2.8	<b>3</b>
Graduate Level	0	0	0	0	0	1	1*	<b>4</b>
Not sure	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	<b>1</b>
No answer	0	0	0	0		0	0	

Note: Total/ # DioResp= Total divided by number of diocese response; \* This was compared with another level with a singular ranking (foundation ranked 3 by PN), since it has a higher rank, this was taken as Rank 4 but cannot be on the same level as Not Sure which was consistently ranked 1 by all dioceses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has both presented a profile of the current status of qualifications in Religious Education among principals, DRSs, senior management and classroom teachers, and offered a national baseline to begin tracking the level of RE and theological qualifications present in New Zealand Catholic School sector. As such, it has been able to generate information that can be productively used in the strategic direction and program development of qualifications for TCI.

#### ANALYSIS

##### *The Question of Qualification*

The most significant factor that emerged in this study was the way “Qualification/s” was understood and the different attitudes surrounding it. The findings suggest that teachers perceive qualifications in various ways: as an accredited academic programme (e.g. Certificate, Diploma, Masters, etc.); as a single or specific paper (e.g. Introduction to Theology, Scripture, etc.); as an NCRS level of certification for practice; and as part of the professional development organised by their schools. Many respondents were unsure about what qualifications they had achieved or what they think they may need.

Reflected throughout the survey was a perception that the requirement to gain a qualification in RE/Theology was going to be a burden placed on teachers by the Church. While participants were aware that more and more attention was being given to the necessity of qualifications many were ambivalent about its importance. Many participants stated that the ability to teach Religious Education should not be primarily measured through qualifications but by the personal witnessing of the teachers. Teachers also considered that years of experience should likewise be given appropriate weighting. There has been much discussion around the increased attention and focus given to qualifications in RE and Theology. Teachers are naturally concerned at a perceived increase in teacher workload. However, in the last two years there has been a considerable shift in teacher’s attitude with many acknowledging the advantages formal study in RE and Theology brings to their classroom teaching and understanding of the curriculum. Teachers are starting to report that they feel more confident in their teaching of the RE curriculum and more competent in their ability to deal with a range of student questions and concerns.

The findings suggest TCI needs to assess the current practice of sending information (in the form of a printed prospectus) to every Catholic School principal, DRS and Board of Trustees in New Zealand annually as this information is not being received by teachers. TCI needs to launch an information campaign that targets teachers stressing its role as the provider of nationally recognised qualifications in RE, Theology and Ministry. Here, relationships with other educational organisations like Diocesan Catholic Schools Offices and NZCEO provide important partnering opportunities that will be essential for the success of upgrading teacher qualifications in these areas. Such information needs to include career path mapping and career opportunities for each qualification. In this way TCI and other relevant educational organisations will be able to guide teacher’s choices in, and access to, qualifications that are appropriate for their career aspirations. The findings also suggest it is important that the qualifications are recognised by NZQA and that enrolments into qualifications need to be supported by the immediate or local school environment – Principals, BOT’s, Diocesan RE Offices etc. Access to on-line qualifications and appropriate course-scheduling was also consistently highlighted throughout the survey as was the desire they be locally accessible, preferably delivered in schools, in area-clusters or among peers.

Another challenge identified by the survey was the development of a curriculum and programme of study that teachers consider is relevant to their teaching, is able to be accomplished when brought alongside the other demands made on their time and can be delivered by facilitators who are competent adult educators.

### *Whose decision matters?*

The relatively low numbers of Principals, DRSs and teachers with Religious Education and Theological qualifications in New Zealand's Catholic schools can, in large part, be attributed to the hiring preferences of the Boards of Trustees, who are the employing bodies of schools. This is not to downplay the role or influence of the principal, as it is clear that the perspective of those in leadership positions is also a key factor that drives the attitude to having staff qualified in Religious Education and Theology. However, the essential question of how important a qualification in RE or Theology is when hiring someone in positions of leadership – Principal or DRS – is a key consideration and this essentially rests with the BOTs.

Accordingly, TCI needs to reposition BOTs as a primary target for information and advertising. Survey respondents placed BOTs among the top 6 roles they considered played a vital part in supporting the school's "ongoing encounter with Jesus Christ". At the moment most of the attention and information has been concentrated on the Principals and DRS, who are actually hired by their BOT. The composition and relational dynamics of BOTs means that interest factors are moderated to the extent where the proprietor representation is merely a part of a bigger representative body. Accordingly, those appointed to these positions could often benefit from extra support and information.

### *Addressing National Concerns Locally*

The findings reveal the level of support and urgency across the various dioceses. Each diocese varies on the level of qualifications achieved by its principals, DRSs, senior management and teachers, and there is complexity in understanding the distinct reasons for the different situations from one diocese to the next. Examples might include understanding the challenges of Christchurch as a context dominated by post-earthquake conditions; or Palmerston North as a diocese with significant socio-economic concerns; or Auckland dealing with an increasingly diverse cultural environment. The data that emerge from these findings do not reflect a measure of the performance of any particular TCI sites or any other education or Church agency.

Therefore, any policy directives and strategies need to be framed within the particular context of each diocese, whilst providing a national track on the achievement of qualifications. This proposes a grounded understanding of national, diocesan and local socio-cultural and economic contexts.

### *Professional Development Plan per School*

As the study conducted by NZCEO proposes<sup>2</sup>, each school would benefit from a professional development plan where the qualifications and formation of teachers of Religious Education is institutionalised and given financial allocation. Such a plan would need to be integrated within the broader strategic direction of the school.

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<sup>2</sup>National Report on teacher professional development and qualifications in religious education and Catholic Character.  
<http://nzceo.catholic.org.nz/media/resources/National-Report-on-Teacher-Professional-Development-and-qualifications-in-religious-education-and-Catholic-Character.pdf> Accessed 24 June 2015



For its own planning purposes, and as part of our need to track our qualification enrolments and completions, TCI has generated a qualification mapping process across all six dioceses. Here those who are enrolled in programmes with TCI are mapped and tracked within their local diocesan context. This means we have a snap shot of the status of RE and theological qualifications at both a national and a local level. One diocese has gone a step further and has mapped all their teachers against a minimum qualification benchmark for teaching in Catholic Schools. This is a useful aid to enable the diocese to strategically plan for the upskilling of their teachers.

### *Further Studies*

There is a need to establish a base line of the number of teachers of Religious Education and to advocate for a specific database of the number of teachers (by head count) from the Ministry of Education.

Finally, this is the first survey within this sector that has attempted to explore both the reality and the perception surrounding teacher qualifications in Religious Education and Theology in New Zealand Catholic schools. It is hoped that the material gathered here is able to provide a foundation or base-line platform for strategic planning in this area at both the National and local level. Going forward, additional qualitative data to assess perceptions of the need for qualifications in Religious Education and Theology, and the expectations and dynamics that shape teacher development in Catholic schools would provide valuable additional layers to this study.

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