

# **UCAC's response to the STRB's consultation on responses to the 25th Remit**

November 2014

**UCAC** | yr undeb sy'n diogelu athrawon a darlithwyr Cymru

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### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. UCAC welcomes this opportunity to comment on the evidence submitted to the STRB by other consultees.
- 1.2. UCAC agrees with the evidence provided by consultees about the current crisis within the profession in terms of poor moral and excessive workload. A workload survey carried out among our members during the 2014 summer term revealed that over 91% felt that they had excessive workload. The number of 'further comments' provided in response to the survey were high and highlighted frustrations about workload and the total inability of teachers to maintain any form of reasonable work-life balance. Many noted their intentions to leave the profession, such intentions are echoed in the comments provided by the NUT in their evidence.

### 2. Issues raised by consultees

UCAC welcomes the clear consensus of opinion from the evidence supplied by the majority of consultees, including unions, those representing the employers' side and the Welsh Government. UCAC fully support the following viewpoints put forward by stakeholders:

#### i. the need to differentiate clearly between pay progression and cost of living increases.

UCAC would argue that the pay rise should be awarded regardless of salary progression. As pointed out by the National Governors' Association (NGA) .. *the pay award is ... designed to be a cost of living rise... and should not be confused with other provision in the School Teachers' Pay Conditions Document in relation to pay progression based on performance.*

#### ii. the need to apply any cost of living pay rise across the board.

UCAC believes that the pay rise should be applicable to all teachers and that there can be no real justification for the STRB to recommend a different course of action. The Welsh Government in their submission clearly support this view and request that the .. *'imposed 1% pay increase is added to all salaries of teachers and school leaders and corresponding allowances to ensure an equitable and fair distribution across the whole workforce'*.

UCAC agrees with the argument put forward that it is important to maintain pay differentials and ensure an appropriate level of reward for those in receipt of additional allowances. We would also echo the findings that many teachers are relinquishing additional responsibilities because of the excessive workload and diminishing value of their remuneration.

It is clear that only the Department for Education's evidence asks for an increase in the minima and maxima alone, allowing schools to come to their own decisions on individual cases. UCAC believes that this a very unrealistic and impractical approach to what is, in fact, a pay rise based on the cost of living. Furthermore, UCAC supports the view of the Welsh Government that local/school determined pay is a less cost effective way of administering pay.

#### iii. the need to maintain clarity and simplicity in the structure.

We concur, from our experience as a union, that a move from the framework that existed in 2012 with 6 points on the main pay scale and 3 points on the upper pay scale, to the current system of providing pay ranges with a minimum and maximum, has added to the workload of head teachers and school governors. It has also added to the workload of Local Authority officers as schools turn to their Local Authority for HR advice. These changes have made the pay system more complex - rather than simplified it, which was one of the initial aims of the STRB. There have been challenges in establishing fair pay policies at a local level which has increased workload when resources and manpower are already at full stretch.

We fully support the recommendation of the Welsh Government on the need for the '*re-introduction of scale points*'. If the Government really want recommendations that are '*not difficult or onerous for schools to implement*' then they should reintroduce scale points. Getting rid of the scale points further complicated the pay structure and made pay decisions harder and more open to challenges based on equality issues; a number of consultees have referred to the additional workload this has entailed. We would wholeheartedly agree with the view of the Welsh Government that '*determining all teachers' salaries locally has already added significant burdens and pressures to workload*'. The teaching unions issued a joint statement in July 2014 calling for the retention of pay reference points.

As stated by the LGA '*Heads and governors do not want and simply do not have the capacity or often the capability to determine, complex performance related pay schemes that ultimately they believe will have little impact on performance other than to divide and demotivate their teachers.*'

**iv. that performance related pay is not an appropriate approach to determining teachers' salary.**

UCAC disagrees with performance related pay. We agree with ATL's view that there 'remains a great deal of disparity in schools over the implementation of performance appraisal.' and welcome the stance of the Welsh Government in challenging the 'notion that pay is a key driver for performance'.

**v. that the reduction in the real value of take home pay is having a detrimental effect on recruitment and retention.**

The data provided by the Department of Education and the Welsh Government does not fully reflect the difficulties experienced by many school in attracting suitable candidates for posts. Our experience in UCAC is similar to that referred to by many other consultees in that a high percentage of vacant post are being re-advertised. ASCL, for example, refers to its members finding recruitment more difficult this year than last year.

Much of the data on the workforce by the Department for Education relates to England alone, in particular that arising from the School Workforce Census. Where separate data for Wales has been provided by the Welsh Government it is not always comparable with that for England, for example data on vacancies was not collected in January 2014 in Wales.

In Wales there has been a policy to adjust ITT intake since 2006 to address over-supply. We are now in a position where we have an increasing birth rate with the need to secure teacher numbers for the future – in primary in particular to begin with, but following on, of course, in the secondary sector. Soon, Wales will need either to attract more people to ITT courses or encourage qualified teachers to return to the classroom following a career break. Decisions on pay uplifts and the pay structure will have an effect on how people view teaching as a career.

It is very important to be able to continue to recruit new entrants to the profession and retain existing experienced teachers. The Bursaries offered in England and the incentives provided by the Welsh Government are indicative of the challenge faced across both England and Wales in recruiting sufficient numbers into teaching. This by now, it appears, is not confined to specific subjects and within the Welsh medium sector alone. Without a clear pay structure such graduates are unlikely to embark on a career in teaching. It is also a matter of concern that so many are leaving the profession within the first few years. UCAC agrees with the NUT/NASUWT/ATL that the Government's current position on pay is likely to deter people from entering the profession.

**vi. that a 1% pay rise is totally inadequate**

UCAC believes that the argument for the need for continued pay restraint is debateable. UCAC believes that public sector pay restraint has a serious impact on the economy in Wales. The public sector is an important employer in Wales and public sector jobs contribute a great deal to the local economy.

The cumulative loss in gross pay for teachers from September 2010 to September 2015 is clearly exemplified by the NASUWT and highlights the actual cash shortfall in earning over this period. We fully support the view that *'teachers have suffered an unprecedented reduction in their total pay rewards since 2010'*. UCAC, therefore, agrees with the arguments put forward by the unions that there is a strong case for a far higher pay rise for all teachers and that the Coalition Government must fund the pay rise fully, including adjusting the block grant for the Welsh Government to cover all the costs.

We are convinced that there is a strong case for an above 1% pay increase across the board. In addition to the significant reduction in take home pay year on year, teachers will also face a further increase in pension contributions in April 2015. The submissions to the STRB clearly demonstrate that there is a need for a significant increase in pay to ensure that teaching can compete with similar professions in attracting and retaining the highest calibre of teachers and school leaders. Another year of below inflation increase can only be detrimental to the profession and the education system as a whole. As stated by the LGA *'pay awards that are too low can impact negatively on teachers motivation, recruitment and retention'*.

### **3. Issues of equality**

A number of consultees have expressed concerns about equality issues. There is clear evidence that women within the profession are paid less on average and are less likely to be promoted, and there is a clear issue about the data available for other groups that may be affected by discrimination. UCAC believes that if this cost of living increase is not applied across the board there will be more pay challenges based on equality issues.

### **4. Conclusion**

It appears as if the Secretary of State has already determined what will happen as a result of the STRB's 25th Report and this calls into question the role of the STRB and the Government's understanding of how the Pay Review Body system is meant to work.

Once again we conclude with the view that the Review Body should have the freedom to assess the evidence and determine an appropriate pay award without the constraints imposed by the Government.

UCAC will welcome the opportunity to discuss matters raised in this further submission with the STRB next month.

**UCAC**  
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