

UCAC's response to the STRB's consultation on responses to the 26th Remit

January 2016

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

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Introduction

1.1 UCAC welcomes this opportunity to present supplementary evidence for the STRB's 26th Report. This evidence is in response to the views of other stakeholders.

1.2 UCAC has also contributed to a joint union response based on important areas of common agreement.

2. Welsh Government's Evidence

2.1 UCAC shares the Minister's disappointment that the draft Wales Bill does not recommend the devolution of teachers' pay and conditions to the Welsh Government.¹

2.2 UCAC believes that the way Local Authorities and schools in Wales have responded since the introduction of the revised framework is further proof that the education system in Wales is rejecting the vision for teachers' pay and conditions introduced by the previous UK Government and due to be further developed by the current UK Government. It is time for Wales to be allowed to take responsibility for decisions on teachers' pay and conditions.

2.3 UCAC, as previously stated, is against performance related pay. We believe that such a system is seen as divisive and de-motivating rather than being a driver for improving performance. We believe that it has also already caused increased workload pressures for head teachers and school governors. The Welsh Government clearly shares this view.

2.4 UCAC stated in our evidence that there is no need to introduce new flexibilities as the STPCD already includes sufficient flexibilities. This view is shared by the majority of consultees.

2.5 UCAC also asserted the need for the 1% increase to be allocated equally across the salaries and allowances of all teachers / leaders. This view is shared by all consultees apart from the DfE.

2.6 UCAC recognises that the Welsh Government makes use of the TPSM to plan for annual ITET intakes. In UCAC's opinion the TPSM is not robust enough in its information and does not have clear enough information about the number of teachers required in the bilingual and Welsh medium sectors. The information gathered at present about training is not sufficient to give a clear, detailed analysis of the numbers required / available to work in these sectors. We understand that there are steps being taken to improve the robustness of the data available.

2.7 The Welsh Government's (and UK Government's) training incentives are used to attract people to train in shortage subjects. Sometimes significant sums of money (up to £20,000) are paid during the training period with no guarantee that this investment will ensure that the student teacher will commit to becoming a teacher at the end of the PGCE year. A student can receive a bursary of up to £20,000, while a Newly Qualified Teacher receives £22,244 annual pay before deductions.

2.8 The use of bursaries may attract students to the teacher training course but does not guarantee retention within the profession once qualified. UCAC believes that it is essential to deal with workload issues and also ensure fair pay for teachers throughout their career in order to be able to retain people within the profession.

2.9 The Minister's evidence notes that "for the period 2014/15 - 2022-2023 using updated data shows that without any change to numbers there would be no oversupply of teachers of primary ITET entrants, but

¹ Minister for Education and Skills, Written Submission to the STRB 26 November 2015

sustained and significant reliance on large numbers of re-entrants to fill vacant posts."² As the increased numbers of pupils go through the system we will begin to see significant increases and the need for more teachers in the secondary sector by 2019 at the latest.

2.10 As noted in the Minister's evidence growth in regular pay during 2015 in Wales has been greater than the public sector increases of 1% average.

2.11 We share the concerns about a non-funded pay rise and would urge the STRB to ensure that a recommendation on teachers' pay is made on the basis of what is fair for teachers and that it must be fully funded by the UK Government.

3. Evidence of the Department for Education

3.1 UCAC is not convinced by the UK Government's argument for pay restraint. On the one hand the Government is taking credit for an economic strategy that it claims is working and has worked effectively over the last five years; on the other hand it claims that public sector workers must pay the price for potential risks from the global economy.

3.2 It claims that regular wages have grown 2.8% but is prepared to restrict teachers to a 1% average pay rise. UCAC does not agree with the claim that a 1% limit is necessary and that this level of pay restraint is required for at least another 4 years. Public sector workers and their families have borne the brunt of the Government's austerity agenda.

3.3 UCAC believes that the DfE and Welsh Government evidence on teacher supply is not sufficiently robust.

3.4 We disagree fundamentally with the Department's arguments about greater flexibility, performance related pay, targeting pay increases and paying non-consolidated increases. The Department seems to be arguing in favour of further complicating the pay framework.

3.5 Paragraph 53 concerning retaining teachers for longer when nearing retirement is misleading as it does not recognise the option of phased retirement that is available to teachers .

3.6 The Government's claim that the average public sector weekly wage is higher than the average private sector wage is misleading in UCAC's opinion. Private sector jobs are often less well paid because they require fewer qualifications or less experience or skill. The Institute for Fiscal Studies' Report: *Public Sector Pay in the UK* (October 2014) reveals the complexities of making comparisons between the public and private sectors.

3.7 We also need to take into account the increase in privatisation and contracting out the less skilled posts in the public sector. There were significant changes in the 1980s and early 1990s, but it is estimated e.g. that approximately a fifth of the remaining public sector cleaning jobs have moved to the private sector since 1997. We have a largely better qualified and more highly skilled public sector workforce than in the past. Figures about average salary within the public sector are therefore misleading, as we are dealing with posts which require a largely better educated and more highly skilled workforce.

3.8 The situation where pay is concerned is complex, as people with degrees tend to be better paid, on average, in the private sector, while those with diplomas, other qualifications or no qualifications tend to do better in the public sector.

² Minister for Education and Skills, Written Submission to the STRB 26 November 2015 - Annex, Recruitment and Retention - Vacancies and demand in Wales

3.9 It is very difficult to find a comparative post to teaching within the private sector, and UCAC does not believe that those local businesses, be they farms, local shops, solicitors, private dentists, accountants, chemists, supermarkets, etc, are competing with the public sector in Wales for teachers or for the graduates who become teachers. There are 70 Independent Schools in Wales (PLASC 2014). The Welsh Government has no intention of introducing academies or free schools in Wales as it is committed to the comprehensive education system.

3.10 It is also true that teachers' hours are not defined and excessive hours have become the norm - hours beyond what would normally for others be a working work or classed as overtime are, therefore, unpaid for teachers.

3.11 As employment opportunities increase as the economy continues to grow we are more likely to lose more teachers from the education system.

3.12 There is not enough data about the situation for teachers in Wales in the DfE evidence. The DfE is still responsible for teachers' pay and conditions in Wales and should, therefore, in UCAC's opinion be ensuring that there is sufficient relevant, robust, data available. The DfE evidence about salaries (median and mean salaries etc) appears to be wholly based on the situation in England.

4. Neost Evidence

4.1 UCAC agrees with NEOST's view about the need to ensure that the pay and conditions framework is straightforward enough to implement effectively and that the recent changes to the framework and the STPCD have, in fact, created further complexities and challenges in implementation and ensuring transparency in pay decisions³.

4.2 UCAC believes that the public purse would be better served if the increased money spent on pay deliberations was used on pay.

4.3 UCAC agrees that there should be no difference in percentage uplifts within the same pay ranges⁴ and we also believe that there should be no difference across the pay ranges.

4.4 We also agree that all salaries and allowances should be increased - not just the minima and maxima of the pay ranges.

4.5 UCAC does not agree with NEOST's views concerning stepping down from the UPR (paragraph 19). UCAC believes that this would be unacceptable, even with so-called safeguards in place.

4.5 UCAC disagrees with NEOST's views on the EWC fee.

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³ NEOST Evidence to the STRB, paragraph 6.

⁴ NEOST Evidence to the STRB, paragraph 12.



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