

# **UCAC's Evidence to the STRB following Responses to the 27<sup>th</sup> Remit**

January 2017

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

## UCAC's Evidence to the STRB following Responses to the 27<sup>th</sup> Remit

UCAC welcomes this opportunity to comment on other responses to the STRB's call for evidence for the 27<sup>th</sup> Remit.

### 1. DfE evidence

- 1.1. It is clear from the DfE's evidence that it has merely reproduced the Welsh Government's evidence when referring specifically to the situation in Wales. As teachers' pay and conditions are not currently devolved, it is disappointing that the U.K. Government does not gather any relevant figures for Wales on pay and conditions of employment, e.g. the evidence about allowances (use of TLRs and SEN allowances) is based entirely on figures for England. This is yet another example of how a partly devolved education system has allowed the U.K. Government to renege on its responsibility for teachers in Wales.
- 1.2. The DfE evidence contains figures for publicly funded schools in England, including academies. As teachers in academies are not subject to the statutory demands of the STPCD we question the validity of including figures for academies within the evidence, especially at times when there is no separate breakdown of figures.
- 1.3. It appears from DfE evidence that academies are driving down the pay of teachers (pay and allowances). This is a cause of concern.
- 1.4. UCAC questions whether the significant sums of money invested in training bursaries do really secure a workforce for the future or merely ensure that more teachers are trained.
- 1.5. In point 36 of its evidence the DfE notes about the STRB's 26<sup>th</sup> Report:

*"The STRB made very clear that it was not intended that the uplifts to the framework should translate into uniform pay increases for every teacher within every school. It is for schools to determine at the institutional level how to take account of the uplifts to pay ranges and allowances in the light of their individual school's policy. The government fully agrees with this approach and that schools should be using their autonomy and making decisions on how they will be rewarding individual teachers in accordance with their pay policies."*

UCAC finds it strange that the STRB and the Government note the importance of autonomy yet appear to be telling schools how not to use that autonomy.

- 1.6. The DfE evidence notes (paragraph C12) that *"Pay is only part of the compensation package..... Graduates would also base their career decisions on other factors, such as future career/promotion prospects, job security and work/life balance."*

In reality, following the recession and the introduction of the austerity agenda, job security in schools in Wales is uncertain. Year after year schools face the possibility of having to go through redundancy processes. Work/life balance issues in education are hugely problematic and are affecting morale and also people's perception of teaching as a career. Work/life balance issues are affecting promotion prospects, as people choose not to take on extra responsibility due to the nature of the demands they already face as classroom teachers. The *"compensation package"* for teachers has, therefore, been compromised.

- 1.7. We would concur with the DfE's evidence in C13 that female teachers generally fare better than male teachers when compared with other graduates, but this is likely to be due to greater discrimination in more male dominated graduate professions. Because of the pay structure that was in place until 2013, ensuring parity and fairness, gender was, generally speaking, not an issue affecting pay decisions for classroom teachers and middle managers in schools – but is still, perhaps, an issue for promotion to senior leadership posts. Generally speaking, male and female teachers were paid equally, depending on years of service and nature of the responsibility held. With the introduction of greater freedoms there is a danger that this equality will be undermined.
- 1.8. We agree that the earnings gap between teachers and other graduates of the same age becomes greater as they become older. And this needs to be addressed.

- 1.9. It is still a matter of concern that full-time teachers are almost twice as likely to have a TLR as part time teachers. This raises potential questions about the attitude towards part time workers in education.
- 1.10. The U.K. Government's approach to teachers' pay certainly undermines recruitment and retention of teachers, as does the problem of excessive workload.

## 2. Welsh Government Evidence

- 2.1. UCAC shares the Welsh Government's concerns about funding. We believe that the U.K. Government should pass on sufficient funding in the block grant to the Welsh Government to cover any increase in teachers' pay.
- 2.2. We agree with the Welsh Government's concerns about performance related pay. We are aware of the divisive nature of such a pay system, especially within a workplace where the contribution of the whole team is so important to the development of the pupil. We share the concerns about the increased workload for head teachers.
- 2.3. UCAC welcomes the Welsh Government's assertion that, "*administering a single system of pay and conditions for teachers across Wales is a far better, fairer and more cost-effective approach than multiple local/school determined pay systems.*"
- 2.4. UCAC believes that there is, at present, insufficient robust data concerning the workforce in Wales (possibly due to the complexities caused by a partly devolved system). The Welsh Government is taking steps to address this issue.
- 2.5. The Welsh Government asserts that, between 2016-2026 "*there will be a sustained reliance on primary sector re-entrants and an increasing reliance on secondary re-entrants to fill vacant posts.*" We are aware that the growth in pupil numbers in the primary sector is about to start affecting the secondary sector, with pupil numbers in the secondary age group expected to increase by 17,600.
- 2.6. As well as recruitment challenges in specific shortage subjects, there is a clear gap between numbers applying for English medium posts and Welsh medium posts, including leadership posts.
- 2.7. Training incentives in Wales, as in England, are unlikely to secure a workforce for the future. They may well attract students to the ITE course but with no guarantees that those students will move on to become members of the profession.
- 2.8. There is clearly a recruitment and retention issue that is not fully recognised by the two Governments. From our experience as a union schools have difficulty recruiting in certain subjects, to Welsh medium posts, to leadership posts, especially head teacher posts and Welsh medium head teacher posts. There are issues in certain geographical areas, e.g. difficulties attracting candidates to rural schools and difficulties attracting supply teachers.

## 3. Devolution

- 3.1. UCAC welcomes the Welsh Government's "*active pursuit*" of the devolution of powers so that teachers' pay and conditions will come within the competence of the Welsh Government.

**UCAC**  
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