

UCAC's response to the Education Department's consultation on the draft version of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2015

July 2015

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

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1. Introduction

UCAC welcomes this opportunity to comment on the draft version of the Document.

UCAC is still concerned about the changes made to the Document since 2012 and we feel the need to re-iterate some of our major concerns in response to the draft version of the Document.

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 the Government's acceptance of the STRB's recommendations and inclusion in the STPCD is unfair and unwise. Excluding some (possibly a majority of teachers) from the pay rise will be damaging and will have an effect on the pay differentials.

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 asked 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 believes 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**

From our experience as a union, 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 and the Department.

The 2015 STPCD as worded in this draft version does nothing to simplify the system. Indeed the system is more complex due to the changes that have been made during the last three years.

We believe that there should be re-introduction of scale points and believe that the decision not to include reference points within the 2015 Document is a mistake. 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. We urge the Government to reconsider introducing reference points within the Document.

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

UCAC continues to maintain the performance related pay is not a system that can work effectively within the teaching profession.

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

The very low pay increase and the fact that not everyone will be given the increase is damaging. The data provided by the Department of Education and the Welsh Government does not fully reflect the difficulties experienced by many schools in attracting suitable candidates for posts.

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 challenges 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.

vi. **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.

Another year of below inflation increase can only be detrimental to the profession and the education system as a whole.

2.

P 69: paragraph 5. This paragraph exemplifies the unnecessary complexities introduced by the changes to the pay system and the Document.

The choices available create a lack of clarity and will mean that it will be difficult to maintain differentials. Paragraphs 5b) 5c) and 5d) are unfair in particular.

Page 77: the table exemplifying how to work out the pay of part time teachers has been left out. We ask for it to be re-instated.

It would be useful to have a specified date for the draft of the Welsh version of the Document.

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