

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and
Education Committee

Ymchwiliad i Addysg a Dysgu Proffesiynol Athrawon | Inquiry into Teachers'
Professional Learning and Education

TT 27

Ymateb gan : Cymdeithas Athrawon a Darlithwyr (ATL Cymru)

Response from : Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL Cymru)

1. About ATL Cymru

1.1 ATL Cymru, the education union, is an independent, registered trade union and professional association, representing teachers, head teachers, lecturers and support staff in maintained and independent nurseries, schools, sixth form, tertiary and further education colleges in Wales. AMiE is the trade union and professional association for leaders and managers in colleges and schools, and is a distinct section of ATL. We recognise the link between education policy and members' conditions of service.

2. Our response

2.1 ATL Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to this inquiry. Arrangements for continuing professional development (CPD); initial teacher education (ITE) and the future workforce are all important topics which our members feel very strongly about.

2.2 We would note that this inquiry overlaps with some work we have undertaken in response to the Welsh Government consultation on ITE. We have therefore drawn on that work below.

2.3 We would also note that 'Developing an excellently skilled workforce'¹ was one of our Put Education First asks ahead of the elections last May. Therefore we are particularly pleased that this topic is on the agenda for the CYPE Committee.

2.4 We would notes that the ALNET Bill will have far reaching implications for the workforce. Whilst we note that is part of a transformation programme there will be specific skills needed by everyone in the education workforce to support children and young people with ALN.

2.5 We believe there needs to be clear parity of CPD opportunities for supply teachers, support staff and those in the FE sector – as well as full training and CPD opportunities for teachers.

¹ <https://www.atl.org.uk/policy-and-campaigns/policy-posts/put-education-first>

3. Arrangements for continuing professional development for the current workforce;

3.1 Last May we asked for:

- Continued Professional Development (CPD) for the whole education workforce
- Welsh Government funding for CPD

3.2 As part of our Put Education First Campaign, we surveyed members online².

3.3 Nearly three quarters (70%) of respondents do not think their CPD opportunities are good enough. One in five (22%) said that their school or college did not offer them opportunities to undertake CPD.

3.4 Welsh Government's professional learning opportunities (formally the New Deal³) for the education workforce goes hand-in-hand with an increasing expectation on members of the education workforce to have higher levels of qualifications and training.⁴ ATL Cymru is clear that the whole education workforce must be included in CPD plans and funding – not just school based teaching staff. Support staff and supply teachers were very unhappy about the lack of CPD opportunities.

3.5 Support staff

3.6 More than eight out of ten (83%) of support staff said they do not get enough opportunities for training and development, including CPD.

3.7 As of April 2016 support staff in schools and FE colleges have to register with the Education Workforce Council. Increased professionalisation should come with recognition of their role and parity in their terms and conditions.

3.8 With a study finding that 65% of all primary Pupil Deprivation Grant-funded interventions were delivered by teaching assistants⁵, these key members of staff should be properly rewarded for their contribution as key members of the education workforce.

3.9 More than nine out of ten (93%) of respondents said that support staff do not get enough recognition from Welsh Government for the work they do.

3.10 It is important that children and young people in Wales are supported by the best people – trained and supported to help them with their learning.

² Survey ran online from 19th Jan 2016 to 4th April 2016

³ <http://gov.wales/newsroom/educationandskills/2015/150316newdeal/?lang=en>

⁴ <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/education/10-year-plan-for-the-early-years-childcare-and-play-workforce/?lang=en>, <http://learning.gov.wales/news/sitenews/new-deal/?lang=en>

⁵ <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/21168/1/141022-evaluation-pupil-deprivation-grant-year-1-en.pdf>

3.11 The FE sector

3.12 There are some specific issues facing the FE workforce. A huge amount of experienced staff have taken voluntary redundancy, with 865 full time equivalent jobs gone in the FE sector between 2012/13 and 2014/15⁶.

3.13 More than four fifths of respondents from FEIs have seen changes for staff and students in recent years.

3.14 More than half (52%) have seen an increased workload for staff, whilst 10% have seen larger class sizes. More than 1 in 5 (23%) identified all of the following:

- Fewer opportunities for careers guidance
- Fewer resources for young people
- Larger class sizes
- Less pastoral care support
- Fewer support staff
- Increased workload for staff

3.15 Clearly FE staff need equal opportunities to training and support. Whilst we recognise that some FEIs offer a range of training and development opportunities, this is not consistently tailored to suit individual staff needs.

3.16 Supply staff

3.17 Whilst we recognise that Welsh Government is due to report soon on the Supply Task Group – set up to look at supply teaching in Wales, we feel it is important to look at CPD for the whole workforce.

3.18 In our Put Education First campaign, we found nearly half (46%) of supply teachers who responded had had no CPD opportunities.

3.19 About a third (36%) had accessed opportunities through schools and colleges, whilst only one in five (18%) had had CPD opportunities through their supply agency.

3.20 One commented: “I have CPD opportunities through very few supply agencies and the times these are held are not always at the best times or are over-subscribed and you do not know when the next session will occur. As a supply teacher I would like far more CPD from a central place, as it is rather hit and miss as to whether I receive effective CPD, especially as the nature of the job means it is peripatetic. Consequently, CPD opportunities, if they exist, are only available if I am on long-term supply.”

3.21 We believe there is a clear need for parity of esteem for support, supply and FE staff and that WG needs to lead from the front in terms of recognising and supporting their different roles.

⁶ <https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Education-and-Skills/Post-16-Education-and-Training/Further-Education-and-Work-Based-Learning/Staff-at-Further-Education-Institutions/fulltimeequivalentstaffnumbersatfurthereducationinstitutions-by-institution>

4. The role of initial teacher education;

4.1 Initial teacher education is a key part of the education system. ATL Cymru largely welcome the proposed changes to ITE. We do however still have some reservations about planned changes and set these out in our response to Welsh Government's recent consultation on ITE⁷.

4.2 Our response Welsh Government on ITE⁸:

4.3 "ATL Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation into ITE. Given the multiple changes, or reforms, to the education sector in Wales, we need a robust system in place to ensure that teacher training is able to help meet the needs of teachers in the future.

4.4 We therefore welcome much of the emphasis placed on improving the current models of teacher training, and broadly welcomed the Furlong findings.

4.5 We do however have a series of concerns about the proposals which are set out below:

4.6 Configuration and remit of EWC

4.7 ATL Cymru is very concerned about the configuration and remit of the EWC. Currently the Council is made up of people appointed by Ministers. We strongly believe there should be no more 'mission creep' or an extension of the remit of the EWC until it includes members elected from all the education unions.

4.8 We note that the Scottish GTC is held up as a good practice example in this consultation. We would note that 19 members of their board are currently elected⁹. This is an opportunity to reconfigure the EWC in line with the Scottish model in order to ensure better buy-in from those across the education profession.

4.9 Fees

4.10 The only way that this model will work is if the EWC is able to charge fees for accreditation. If they cannot charge fees, the costs of administration will be met by their registrants. This is not acceptable.

4.11 The funding for the fee must be met by WG or HEIs, no extra funding should come from already stretched partner schools.

4.12 Funding and resources

4.13 The education profession requires sufficient funding and resources to deliver an education which will meet the needs of a future generation for Wales. Schools and

⁷ <https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/initial-teacher-education-accreditation>

⁸

https://www.atl.org.uk/sites/www.atl.org.uk/files/files/ATL%20Cymru%20response%20to%20ITE%20Draft%20criteria_0.pdf

⁹ <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/about-gtcs/about-us.aspx>

Colleges need funding to ensure that all current staff have sufficient CPD opportunities.

4.14 Expectations on schools

4.15 Whilst we welcome the emphasis placed upon the importance of school based experience for those people undertaking ITE, we would be concerned if schools have an equal accountability for the training of teachers as HEIs. The responsibility should ultimately lie with HEIs, as otherwise this will lead to an unnecessary increase in workload for school based staff. Workload is already a huge issue for education staff in Wales.

4.16 It would be inappropriate for schools to have to allocate extra time or resources without funding and resources from WG or HEI partners to become ITE schools.

4.17 Reform agenda

4.18 We remain concerned about the level and pace of change expected of the education workforce by the Welsh Government. It seems a bit of a cyclical situation that, in order to improve the quality of education for future generations and the future education workforce, the current education workforce will have more to do in terms of workload.

4.19 Whilst we accept, and welcome, a more rigorous approach to ITE we want to ensure that the current education workforce has suitable and well-resourced CPD opportunities. CPD opportunities will need to be expanded to ensure the different ethos required in Donaldson's "Curriculum for Wales". Wales cannot simply depend on the future education workforce and not support the current one.

4.20 ALN

4.21 It is difficult to understand the precise implications for the changes on additional learning needs (ALN) and ALP. Children with ALN will undoubtedly see changes to the provision of ALN under the forthcoming legislation. However, the level of ALN learning for students, and expectations on them, is not made clear within this document.

4.22 FE

2.23 ATL Cymru are very disappointed that the proposals do not include any mention of FE teaching and provision. The reconfiguration of the ITE is the opportunity to ensure that children and young people receive lecturing from those people who have had the same opportunities for training and development as those school based practitioners."

4.23 Over-all we would highlight that although many changes planned to ITE are welcomed, we need to ensure that teachers and other education professionals are supported the whole way through their careers.

5. The sufficiency of the future workforce.

5.1 We believe it is difficult to examine the sufficiency of the future workforce without looking at the education reform agenda as set out by the Welsh Government.

5.2 Education reform agenda

5.3 Education professionals in Wales face many reforms in the coming years. These include (but are not limited to):

- the new Curriculum for Wales;
- changes to professional standards;
- changes to the qualifications system;
- changes to additional learning needs (ALN) provision;
- the New Deal, or professional learning offer;
- digital competency framework;
- literacy and numeracy framework;
- changes to categorisation

5.4 Whilst we would agree that changes to the education system do need to happen, we believe that the workload for education professionals must be closely monitored to ensure that the reforms do not have a detrimental impact on staff.

5.5 We would note from our survey that more than half (52%) of those in FEIs have seen an increased workload for staff, whilst 10% have seen larger class sizes

5.6 It is within the context of the above reforms that we would highlight the need for the education sector to have the opportunities to develop their use of the Welsh language in schools and colleges, and enable future generations of children and young people the opportunities to use and develop their Welsh.

5.7 We would highlight that the sufficiency of the future workforce in the broadest sense relies on the current education system being fully supported in order that children and young people of today can not only become teachers of the future, but are skilled and capable citizens of tomorrow.

5.8 We therefore believe without development opportunities for the current workforce, the future workforce will be impacted upon.

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