

## **Response to the CYPE Committee's request for additional information following the Education Workforce Council's oral evidence provided on 5 June 2025.**

The Education Workforce Council (EWC) welcomes the opportunity to provide further evidence to the Committee's inquiry into teacher recruitment and retention. This submission builds on our written and oral evidence, focusing on how the teaching profession can be made more attractive to graduates.

Our perspective is informed by intelligence from a range of sources, including the unique data we hold on the Register of Education Practitioners and the regular engagement that we undertake with registrants, stakeholders, and prospective teachers. This includes the daily conversations that our Promotion of Careers team has with potential applicants to teaching from across Wales and beyond, both in-person (at events such as careers fairs) and on the telephone.

### **Key priorities to be addressed to make teaching more attractive to graduates**

As outlined in our original submission to the Committee, the EWC advocates for a system that attracts a diverse and suitably qualified workforce, offers attractive pay and conditions, supports teachers professional growth, empowers them to thrive and encourages them to remain in the profession. Creating the conditions in which practitioners are able to deliver high quality teaching and learning and experience long-term career satisfaction, is essential to improving both recruitment and retention within the profession.

It is important to recognise that many of the barriers to recruiting the next generation of teachers often mirror those causing qualified practitioners to leave the profession. Improving teacher recruitment and retention in Wales therefore requires a holistic, system-wide approach that addresses challenges across the entire career pipeline. We would suggest that the following areas should be prioritised for action.

#### **Improving working conditions and ensuring that pay is competitive**

Teachers need to be valued and seen as such by the wider public (including graduates). This goes beyond salary (although it is of course crucial that pay is competitive with that available in other graduate professions). Targeted financial incentives, such as those for ITE students training in priority subjects, through the medium of Welsh, or from ethnic minority backgrounds, can also help support recruitment.

Reducing workload and streamlining bureaucracy, are also essential to transform both the day-to-day experience of teachers (reducing attrition and boosting morale) and to shift negative perceptions among potential entrants. Teachers must also be properly supported as life-long learners through being provided with access to high-quality professional learning. A high-quality professional learning offer is also essential to support teachers' development and progression, particularly for those who wish to remain in the classroom.

### Offering greater flexibility

Reimagining teaching roles to reflect modern expectations around flexibility should also be considered to help attract a wider and more diverse range of individuals into the profession - building on ideas explored within the OECD's recent Constructing Scenarios for the Future of Teaching in Wales report. Innovations such as varied working hours, more adaptable career structures, and hybrid roles could make teaching more compatible with the expectations of today's graduates.

### Developing a more diverse workforce

A more diverse teaching workforce is essential to ensure that the teaching profession better reflects the communities it serves and is relatable for all learners. Moreover, in order to tackle the broader recruitment challenges in teaching, it is essential to ensure that the profession is seen as a viable and rewarding career for people from a variety of backgrounds, helping to widen the talent pool and foster a more inclusive and representative education system.

### Workforce planning and data-driven decision making:

Robust workforce planning, underpinned by accurate, timely data, is essential to anticipate and respond to changing needs. This includes understanding regional trends, subject-specific shortages, and future demand – and should inform both policy development and investment. Survey data from reputable sources, such as national workforce surveys previously undertaken by the EWC (in partnership with the Welsh Government, trade unions and other stakeholders), can also provide valuable insights into practitioner experiences and play an important role in informing effective policy development.

### Learning from international best practice

Finally, we would wish to highlight that teacher recruitment and retention are global challenges. UNESCO's 2024 Global Report on Teachers highlights a worldwide shortage of practitioners, with 44 million additional primary and secondary teachers required by 2030. Welsh Government should actively consider (and continue to monitor) developments elsewhere, in relation to teacher recruitment and retention, and seek to adapt successful practice from other countries to our context.

### **Financial incentives**

We note that the Committee has also requested additional information regarding the EWC's recent work in on the effectiveness of financial incentives designed to attract people into teaching. At the request of Welsh Government, we have undertaken extensive data analysis tracking individuals who have received Welsh Government funding to support entry into the profession (between 2014/15 and 2021/22), and their retention within the profession, using data held on our register. However, as this work was commissioned by Welsh Government the committee would need to approach them directly for any further details of this analysis.