

# Petitions Committee

## Consultation on petition P-04-432 Stop the Army Recruiting in Schools

### Response from Association of Teachers and Lecturers - Wales

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Response to petition committee: Armed Forces in schools.

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) represents over 160,000 teachers, lecturers, head teachers, principals, and support staff across the UK in maintained and independent schools, further education colleges and sixth forms. It represents over 6,500 education staff in Wales.

We are pleased to provide our contribution to your consideration of the recent petition: *We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to recommend that the armed forces should not go into schools to recruit.*

Having discussed the matter at length at our recent Committee in Wales meeting we wish to note at the outset that there was a mixture of opinion about the value and role of visits by the armed services. However, in the main we do not have any particular concerns relating to the armed forces providing careers advice or training in schools.

Our membership was of the opinion that any difference in the working of the armed forces across the maintained schools sector compared to independent schools was largely to do with historical legacy and the existence of cadet corps, etc.

We found no evidence that schools either preclude or advocate for any particular career choice, and, on balance, as part of the overall careers advice

in schools, our membership felt that the armed forces had the same right to provide information to pupils as any other employer. We were unable to establish if armed forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas.

It was felt that any career advice should be provided in an appropriate and timely manner and that career advice should be given at a time judged by the school as appropriate for the maturity and relevancy of pupils.

Our membership felt that experiences provided by armed forces, such as cadets, to learners delivered valuable skills and knowledge to individuals. These experiences enjoyed whilst at school have enhanced learner's career choices; not necessarily resulting / leading to a career in the armed forces.

We have every confidence that schools in Wales are socially responsible and aim to provide a balanced career advice programme to learners. While the armed forces remain a legitimate career path we see no reason why they should not be allowed to visit schools to promote that career.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P.C. Dixon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Dr Philip Dixon  
Director, ATL Cymru