

Petitions Committee

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



Response from UCAC

Armed Forces Recruitment in Schools

National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee Inquiry

April 2013

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

Armed Forces Recruitment in Schools

UCAC's response to the National Assembly for Wales Petitions Committee's request for information

UCAC welcomes this opportunity to respond to the request of the Petitions Committee. The union represents 5,000 teachers, school leaders and further and higher education lecturers in all parts of Wales.

- **Do you have any concerns about the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools or do you welcome such advice?**
- **What are the benefits and disadvantages of the Armed Forces giving career advice in schools?**
- **What impact, if any, would restricting armed forces access to schools have on young people's access to information about Armed Forces careers?**

We regret the fact that the United Kingdom allows recruitment to the armed forces at 16 years of age. This goes against the practice in other European Union countries and NATO, which set the threshold at 18 years of age. It also goes against international legal commitments, including the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (OPAC).

Nevertheless, it must be accepted that the armed forces offer accredited and lawful professions.

As a result, we believe that, from a school's perspective, it is important to try to differentiate between recruitment on the one hand, and providing career advice on the other.

UCAC would object to attempts within schools to recruit pupils under 18 to the armed forces. We believe that it is inappropriate for children to be involved in military activities, and to endanger their lives as a result of their work, before reaching adult age and voting age. As the establishment of cadet units within schools would come too close to constituting recruitment activity, UCAC objects to this.

However, UCAC would defend pupils' right to receive information regarding the armed forces as a possible post-18 career path, in the context of receiving information about various other career paths. It would be inappropriate to try to prevent pupils from receiving such information, which could lead to a career.

- **Do you have any evidence that the Armed Forces target their activities in schools in more deprived areas?**

We have no firm evidence regarding this matter.

- **Do the Armed Forces work differently in independent schools than in local authority schools?**

We have no evidence regarding this matter.



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