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Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/LN/5866/24
Buffy Williams MS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education
Committee Welsh Parliament
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

6 September 2024

Dear Buffy

Thank you for your letter dated 24 June regarding your proposed inquiry into teacher recruitment and retention.

I share the committee's concerns on the recruitment of science specialist teachers and teachers able to teach through the medium of Welsh.

Teacher recruitment and retention is affected by a myriad of complex and interconnected factors. I have set out in the attached annex responses to the questions asked in your letter and trust they are useful as you continue scoping your inquiry into this area.

I look forward to working with you on your proposed inquiry so that we can ascertain what further actions and activity we can undertake to support our teaching workforce and education system in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Lynne Neagle AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Annex

1. What is your general assessment of the state of teacher recruitment and retention across Wales across the statutory age range, both in terms of the immediate staffing challenges facing schools and the Welsh Government's longer-term aims to raise educational standards?

Initial teacher education (ITE) recruitment into the primary sector continues to be buoyant. However, recruitment into secondary remains challenging, with strong competition from other sectors for graduates with STEM specialities, compounded by even smaller numbers with Welsh language capability.

Staffing challenges faced by schools are highly contextual and national level fulfilments and concerns (such as the level of ITE recruitment into primary, STEM subjects and Welsh medium) may not be applicable at a local level. The responsibility for the employment of teachers in schools lies with local authorities and governing bodies as the employing bodies. They are responsible for ensuring that sufficient, suitable staff are employed or engaged to work at their school/s in order to provide education appropriate for the ages, aptitudes, abilities and needs of their learners. You note in your letter that school specific data on their science departments is lacking; this is held by the local authorities. However, the School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) does collect information on the teaching of subjects in schools and the number of hours taught across a two-week timetable. Further information can be found in the [School Workforce Census Results](#) publication and on the [StatsWales](#) website.

Information from the School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC) shows the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of teachers in academic year (AY) 2023/24 has decreased by 2.9% since AY2021/22 but is slightly higher than AY2020/21.

Full-time equivalent (FTE) number of teachers by sector, AY2020/21 to AY2023/24

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Nursery and Primary schools	11,620	11,950	11,770	11,245
Middle Schools	1,205	1,245	1,470	1,605
Secondary Schools	10,135	10,425	10,280	9,965
Special Schools	780	825	860	875
Pupil Referral Units (PRU)	250	255	260	300
Total	23,985	24,700	24,640	23,995

Source: School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC)

The pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) has increased in nursery, primary and secondary schools in AY2023/24, but is lower in all sectors compared with AY2020/21.

Pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) by sector, AY2020/21 to AY2023/24

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Nursery	13.6	10.9	10.5	11.4
Primary	21.9	21.0	20.9	21.3
Middle	18.0	17.4	17.2	17.2
Secondary	17.2	16.8	16.6	17.0
Special	6.9	6.7	6.7	6.7
Total	19.2	18.5	18.4	18.6

Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

The patterns seen in both the teacher numbers and pupil-teacher ratios may be partly due to the [Welsh Government funding](#) provided to schools under the Recruit, Recover and Raise Standards (RRRS) plan to recruit extra staff to support pupils during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Welsh Government provided the RRRS funding to schools during the pandemic and the recovery period up to financial year (FY) 2023-24, though the amount distributed decreased since the initial funding in FY2020-21.

The average number of applications received per advertised post in AY2022/23 was 7.8, down from 12.0 in AY2020/21. This pattern is reflected in all sectors with advertised posts in primary schools receiving 12.3 applications on average in AY2022/23 compared to 4.6 for posts in secondary schools.

Average applications per advertised post by sector, AY2020/21 to AY2022/23

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Primary Schools	19.3	14.1	12.3
Secondary Schools	7.3	5.5	4.6
All Schools	12.0	9.1	7.8

Source: School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC)

[My recent statements](#) have confirmed that our priority is to enable a system that is focused on delivering sustained improvement in educational attainment so that every learner can fulfil their potential.

The work to ensure that our learners have the best possible educational experiences and outcomes begins by ensuring that they are in school with high quality and experienced teachers who have the highest expectations for them. We are already taking steps to develop further support for schools to raise standards as set out in my recent Oral Statement. I will be making a further statement on our plans to raise standards in the Autumn.

2. How do you respond to the concerns raised by the science bodies about the sufficiency of science specialist secondary school teachers in Wales? Are there any other subjects about which you have particular concerns (e.g. Welsh (as a subject), modern foreign languages, mathematics and IT)?

I recognise the vital importance of having this specialism in our schools to enable learners' progression, and the Curriculum for Wales expects learners to be able to increasingly specialise as they move forward with their learning.

The ITE priority subjects and/or phases are determined annually using School Workforce Census Data (SWAC) and Higher Education Statistical Authority (HESA) Data. They represent the subject or phase where there are immediate issues in both ITE recruitment and within the workforce nationally (including the Welsh-medium workforce). Identification of these subjects and/or phases enables the Welsh Government to provide targeted incentivisation to graduates in these areas to consider entering ITE, and thereafter the teaching workforce, via the Priority Subject Incentive (PSI) scheme. It should be noted that this is not a statistical exercise alone and that contextual factors must be used in determining the final list of priority subjects.

For a number of years STEM subjects and languages (including Welsh) have been a priority, and in many instances recruitment into ITE has been insufficient as the pipeline of students, from A-level Welsh for example, has been small and is further compounded by smaller numbers [studying their undergraduate degree through the medium of Welsh](#). In addition, STEM graduates particularly have a wide range of competitive career options available to them. The current priority subjects are:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Design & Technology
- Information Technology
- Mathematics
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Physics
- Welsh

We are also taking action to help build specialist capacity within the existing teaching workforce. In the 2024-25 financial year, the Welsh Government provided nearly £163,000 to the Institute of Physics to deliver the Stimulating Physics and Whole School Inclusion and Equity networks. The Stimulating Physics Network provides targeted coaching to early career and non-specialist practitioners to design inspiring and engaging physics lessons and improve their understanding of physics qualifications and career pathways. Our Global Futures Programme for international languages is also focused on building the skills, knowledge, and experiences practitioners need to plan and deliver effective international languages provision.

In terms of the data the average number of applications for posts advertised have decreased for all subjects between AY2020/21 and AY2022/23. The average number of applications for priority subject posts, as identified above, are consistently below the average number of applications for all secondary posts. Welsh (1.8 applications per post), Information Technology (2.2), Physics (2.3) and Chemistry (2.8) received the lowest number of applications per post in AY2022/23. This compares to History (9.7), Physical Education (6.9) and English (5.0) which consistently receive a greater number of applications per post on average.

Average applications per advertised post for priority subjects and selected other subjects, AY2020/21 to AY2022/23

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Biology	4.5	4.3	3.5
Chemistry	6.4	3.6	2.8
Design & Technology	6.2	2.8	3.4
English	8.7	6.5	5.0
History	24.4	8.8	9.7
Information Technology	3.6	2.6	2.2
Mathematics	4.7	4.6	3.5
Modern Foreign Languages	7.8	4.5	3.5
Physical Education	14.3	10.3	6.9
Physics	3.7	2.4	2.3
Welsh	2.6	2.3	1.8
<i>Primary Schools</i>	<i>19.3</i>	<i>14.1</i>	<i>12.3</i>
<i>Secondary Schools</i>	<i>7.3</i>	<i>5.5</i>	<i>4.6</i>
All Posts	12	9.1	7.8

Source: School Workforce Annual Census (SWAC)

It should be noted that these are national subject priorities identified utilising national level data sets. There may be different recruitment concerns at a local authority or school specific level.

3. What is your assessment of the sufficiency of the education workforce who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh and the importance of this to the Welsh Government’s ambitions for the development of proficiency in Welsh in both Welsh-medium and English-medium schools?

Our ambition for a million Welsh speakers by 2050 demands far-reaching changes and actions to be taken. Our new curriculum puts the Welsh language at the heart of learning in Wales but if we are to create a nation where people speak and use the language as part of their everyday lives, increasing the number of learners in Welsh-medium schools is vital. For us to do that we need a strong and skilled workforce.

We published the [Welsh in Education Workforce Plan](#) in May 2022. The plan includes a range of actions for Welsh Government to take in partnership with stakeholders to address four key aims:

- Increasing the number of Welsh and Welsh-medium teachers
- Increasing the number of Welsh-medium teaching assistants
- Developing the Welsh language skills of all practitioners
- Increasing leadership capacity in the Welsh-medium sector and developing the leadership of Welsh in all schools.

The latest data on the number of Welsh-medium teachers can be found below. We are making gradual process, but it remains a huge challenge. We will continue to work with partners including schools, CYDAG, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and our ITE partnerships to support recruitment to our secondary sector. We have said on a number of occasions that we are open to any suggestions on any new ideas to support recruitment.

We will be publishing an update to the data analysis and WESP analysis documents that sit alongside the Welsh in education workforce plan in the autumn with the latest data on the workforce.

Number of primary teachers who teach through the medium of Welsh			
2022/23 baseline 2,874	2031 target 3,900	Gap to target 1,026	Approx additional no. of teachers per year 103
Number of secondary teachers who teach Welsh as a subject or subjects through the medium of Welsh			
2022/23 baseline 2,555	2031 target 4,100	Gap to target 1,545	Approx additional no. of teachers per year 170

An External Implementation Group has been established to monitor progress and will review the proposals for implementation in future years once the updated data analysis and WESP analysis documents are available.

We have also appointed a secondary headteacher on secondment to start in September 2024 who will lead on reviewing the actions taken to date and work with the sector and key partners to develop further actions that will support the workforce implications of the Welsh Language and Education Bill.

The key challenge is around the recruitment of secondary teachers for Welsh-medium schools and this has been the focus of the number of actions we have taken since 2022.

These actions include:

- Continuing to provide opportunities through the Cynllun Pontio for teachers who have been away from the profession to return to teaching; for primary teachers to cross over to the secondary sector, and for teachers from the English-medium sector to cross over to the Welsh-medium sector. A further 25 will start in September 2024 in key subject areas such as Welsh, maths and science.
- Supporting schools to develop innovative ways to solve some of their recruitment challenges through the Welsh-medium workforce capacity development grant (approximately £800k per academic year).
- Funding the Open University to expand its employment-based teaching pathway, to include design and technology and computer science from September 2023; these are subjects where there are a shortage of teachers and this route enables aspiring teachers to train in their communities and to be paid while training. The courses are available in both English and Welsh, however, for Welsh-medium schools the employment costs are fully funded by Welsh Government.
- Funding for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to establish Cadw Cyswllt (keeping connected) which promotes opportunities for students in England to return to Wales to prepare to teach.
- Funding for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol to provide mentoring sessions to approximately 50 individuals as part of the Addysgu'r Dyfodol (future teaching) programme. The programme provides 3 online mentoring sessions to undergraduate students and the opportunity to undertake 2 work experience days in a school (primary/secondary, Welsh-medium or bilingual) to encourage them to go into teaching. A tracking system has been put in place to understand the impact of the programme.
- Establishing the Welsh in education Teacher Retention Bursary. £5,000 will be available to teachers who have achieved Qualified Teacher Status since August 2020, and who have completed three years of teaching Welsh, or three years of teaching through the medium of Welsh, in the secondary phase. This bursary will initially be available until Autumn 2028 and will provide us with data on whether the introduction of a bursary encourages teachers to enter and stay in the profession.

Alongside actions to support an increase in the number of secondary Welsh-medium teachers we have also been continuing to implement actions to support all practitioners to develop their Welsh language skills to be able to teach and use the language in all our schools.

We have developed guidance for local authorities to analyse workforce data in terms of practitioners' ability to teach through the medium of Welsh and the Welsh language skills of practitioners in the English medium sector. This will enable local authorities to report consistently on their workforce and training development needs as part of their Welsh in Education Strategic Plans.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh is now taking a co-ordinated role in planning the delivery of Welsh language professional learning for the education workforce.

A full scoping exercise has been undertaken, working with all local authorities and regional consortia to understand the Welsh language skills development needs at a local level. Based on the scoping, the Centre has now developed a plan for new delivery models to be piloted, including school-based support, residential courses, tutor-led online courses and professional learning resources. The full offer for the 2024/25 academic year has been agreed with local authorities and information will be available on the Centre's website soon.

From September 2025 the Centre will be managing the intensive courses available through the Sabbatical Scheme alongside other courses being developed for the education workforce. The Centre has also been working with ITE providers to provide resources to support students to develop their Welsh language skills while they are training. These have now been shared with all providers and will be incorporated into courses from September.

The Welsh Language and Education Bill sets new ambitions to enable all learners to use the language confidently. The workforce is crucial to the realisation of the aims set out in the Bill and the steps that we are taking will support the implementation.

4. Do you believe that the bursaries currently offered to trainee teachers are sufficient, specifically within the context of higher bursaries offered in England?

The issue of incentives is a complex one and needs to be set in the context of developing the profession as an attractive career proposition.

[2022 research](#) and [further 2023 research](#) (utilising England's ITE data and incentive scheme broadly equivalent to the PSI) shows consistent evidence that increases in incentives increases recruitment. Similar research has not been conducted on Wales' incentive schemes. The Minority Ethnic Incentive scheme (MEI) is too new for a suitable number of cohorts/eligible persons to conduct this analysis presently. Analysis work on retention aspects around the Priority Subject Incentive (PSI) scheme, which closely resembles England's incentive scheme, is in the course of being implemented.

Welsh [research into recruitment](#) (and retention) of teachers into the workforce (conducted by EWC on behalf of the Welsh Government), [Welsh Government research](#) and [OECD research](#) indicate that incentivising entry into ITE is not the only consideration for ITE applicants and should form part of a wider holistic package of policy interventions. These include considerations around graduate levels of pay and conditions, early years support and professional development, and actions around pay, workload and wellbeing.

We offer a range of incentives to attract applicants into ITE in Wales. These schemes are targeted at those areas and subjects where recruitment is most challenging; priority subjects, the Welsh-medium sector and attracting more entrants from ethnic minorities. Eligible individuals can avail themselves of each of the incentive schemes. In academic year 2024/25, a total amount of £25,000 is available to those that meet the requirements of all three schemes:

- [Priority Subject Incentive scheme](#) (£15,000)
- [Iaith Athrawon Yfory scheme](#) (£5,000)
- [Minority Ethnic Incentive scheme](#) (£5,000)

The Welsh Government recognises the competitive incentive scheme available to subject specialist student teachers in England and it's potential to attract Welsh domicile graduates to study English Initial Teacher Training (ITT). However, there are limited resources available to us to encourage individuals to enter Welsh ITE, and difficult decisions must be made in recognition of the fiscal landscape.

As outlined in response to question 3 above, we have also established the Welsh in education Teacher Retention Bursary for teachers who have achieved Qualified Teacher Status since August 2020, and who have completed three years of teaching Welsh, or three years of teaching through Welsh, in the secondary phase. This £5,000 bursary will initially be available until Autumn 2028 and will provide us with data on whether the introduction of a bursary encourages teachers to enter and stay in the profession to inform future plans.

5. Do you wish to raise anything else with us that you believe is relevant to any future work we undertake relating to teacher recruitment and retention?

a. National marketing and advocacy activity to support ITE recruitment.

Promoting teaching as a career, getting undergraduates and A-level students engaged earlier, and creating new opportunities for adults to join the profession are crucial to ensure a pipeline into ITE and thereafter the teaching profession. Teaching Wales is a Welsh Government marketing campaign to encourage people into teaching.

Following a review of Discover Teaching, a recruitment campaign run by the Education Consortia, responsibility for the website transferred to Education Workforce Council and Welsh Government commissioned research in 2018 to inform a teacher recruitment marketing campaign. Teaching Wales was launched by Welsh Government in January 2019. The Educators Wales website, part of the EWC's education workforce recruitment advocacy service was launched in June 2021. Since the outset Welsh Government and EWC have worked extremely closely together on promotion of teaching as a career, linking up the marketing campaign and the advocacy service.

Teaching Wales is the overarching 'campaign brand' for national teacher recruitment campaigns (which directly refers people to Educators Wales and individual ITE centres to follow up contact). The initial priority of Teaching Wales was the promotion of priority subjects in secondary schools. The other two key strands developed since then has been attracting more people who can speak and teach in Welsh into the profession which also includes the Cynllun Pontio (the Welsh-medium conversion programme) activity and attracting more Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic individuals to teach. During the year we will be looking to expand the campaign into attracting more individuals to become teachers in special schools. Primary target audiences include; undergraduates and A-level students, Welsh speakers, Teaching Assistants, STEM under graduates and graduates, career changers, Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic individuals, stay at home parent/carers and freelancers.

The Teaching Wales campaign, featuring real teachers in Wales, runs throughout the year with bursts at key decision making times (July to September and Jan to March). Activity includes a wide range of communication techniques including targeted social media, online advertising, Radio, TV catch-up, PR, outdoor advertising, and key events. There are close working relationships with each of the ITE Partnerships in Wales with regular updates and sharing of campaign activity to support the sector and join up our efforts to recruit more teachers into the profession. Since the end of October 2023, the campaign has generated over 4,500 click throughs from the Educators Wales website to ITE Partnerships.

Because of the need to increase the numbers of people who can teach in Welsh, a specific marketing working group has been established comprising Welsh Government, EWC, Coleg Cenedlaethol Cymraeg, and more recently the National Centre for Learning Welsh. The purpose of the group is to collaborate, share information and work together to develop a three-year marketing communications strategy. The focus of the first year has been looking at opportunities to work together and raise the profile of teaching through Welsh as a career, including attendance at the Urdd, National Eisteddfod and other major summer events. The work has also included meeting with all ITE Partnerships to understand students' motivations and barriers into choosing teaching as a career, ITE Partnerships' recruitment strategies and identifying opportunities to facilitate more joint working.

The [Educators Wales](#) recruitment, advocacy, and support service (led by the EWC and funded by Welsh Government) was launched in September 2021 and has engaged with over 27,000 individuals (correct as of January 2024) interested in a career in education.

The service seeks out opportunities for partnership working, such as supporting ITE Partnerships with innovative ideas to implement activity in their own recruitment strategies and plans, such as on campus promotion of ITE. Educators Wales also deliver information sessions on careers within education in Wales in schools and school careers fairs alongside larger scale events such as the Eisteddfod.

In addition to the above, the ITE Partnerships are required under their accreditation guidelines to have their own recruitment strategies in place. Welsh Government communications team work closely with EWC and HEIs' marketing teams to ensure synergy, value for money and aligned messaging across all Welsh Government, EWC and ITE Partnerships promotional activity in the ITE recruitment space.

The numbers applying to teach during Covid rose and has fallen again. To ensure our Teaching Wales campaigns are based on current insight and evidence, work is underway in to update our insight to understand motivations and barriers to going into teaching from our various audiences. This has included desk research, focus groups/1:1s, social media listening and now developing personas and messaging to inform the next steps in the campaign.

b. Student finance in Wales and information on Welsh undergraduates

In recent years Wales has set a precedent for providing the most generous student finance package available to eligible Welsh students. The PGCE attracts the annual [undergraduate financial support package](#) so ensuring the best possible support for student teachers. This means that an eligible student may apply for up to £10,315 or £15,170 maintenance support, subject to where they are living while studying, and a tuition fee loan of up to £9,250 for each year of their PGCE course. Other grants are available for those with dependants. If a student chooses to study part time their support will be pro-rated.

The committee will wish to note the below HESA data regarding the undergraduate population from AY2021/22; undergraduates are the recruitment pool from which PGCE secondary subject specialists are recruited from. A degree is required to become a qualified school teacher.

Note that subject of study and module subject differ and are therefore not comparable. More information is available on this in Section B of [Welsh Language in Higher Education, 2021/22 \(gov.wales\)](#).

**Welsh domiciled undergraduates by country of provider and subject of study
(AY2021/22)**

	Wales	Other UK	Total UK
Medicine and dentistry	930	1,240	2,170
Subjects allied to medicine	9,060	3,130	12,190
Biological and sport sciences	3,450	1,640	5,090
Psychology	4,500	1,210	5,710
Veterinary sciences	100	350	450
Agriculture, food and related studies	430	470	900
Physical sciences	1,040	1,045	2,085
Mathematical sciences	600	550	1,150
Engineering and technology	3,350	1,795	5,145
Computing	3,670	1,000	4,665
Architecture, building and planning	885	650	1,530
Geography, earth and environmental studies (natural sciences)	725	515	1,240
Total Science	28,735	13,595	42,325
Social sciences	7,735	2,680	10,415
Law	4,095	1,355	5,450
Business and management	5,465	2,660	8,120
Language and area studies	1,675	1,060	2,735
Historical, philosophical and religious studies	1,340	1,000	2,345
Education and teaching	3,785	675	4,460
Combined and general studies	3,265	140	3,405
Media, journalism and communications	655	525	1,185
Design, and creative and performing arts	3,220	3,340	6,560
Geography, earth and environmental studies (social sciences)	140	130	265
Total Non-Science	31,375	13,565	44,940
Total	60,110	27,160	87,270

Source: HESA Student and Student Alternative records via Welsh Government

Notes:

Numbers based on enrolments for students who are:

1. In the Standard Higher Education registration population
2. Of Welsh domicile
3. Studying at Undergraduate level

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5

Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Figures calculated based on the full person equivalent (FPE). This means that if a student on a course studies more than one subject, the course is apportioned between those subjects. For example, a student studying 0.5 Business studies and 0.5 French will be counted as 0.5 FPE in Business & administrative studies and 0.5 FPE in Languages.

Data for subject of study (or course subject) and module subjects differ. Figures for the two should not be compared.

Welsh domiciled undergraduates in Wales by provider and Welsh speaker status (AY2021/22)

	Fluent Welsh speaker	Welsh speaker not fluent	Not a Welsh speaker	Unknown	All	% who are fluent Welsh speakers	% who are non-fluent Welsh speakers
Higher education institutions	7,840	7,995	36,350	6,795	58,980	15%	15%
<i>Aberystwyth University</i>	655	420	1,015	20	2,115	31%	20%
<i>Bangor University</i>	1,115	420	1,465	0	2,995	37%	14%
<i>Cardiff University</i>	1,400	1,225	5,365	10	8,000	18%	15%
<i>Cardiff Metropolitan University</i>	685	690	3,485	60	4,915	14%	14%
<i>Swansea University</i>	1,215	1,210	4,885	0	7,315	17%	17%
<i>University of Wales Trinity St David</i>	835	990	4,575	115	6,510	13%	15%
<i>University of South Wales</i>	1,010	1,310	7,815	105	10,235	10%	13%
<i>Wrexham University</i>	290	500	2,155	65	3,010	10%	17%
<i>Open University</i>	640	1,225	5,595	6,425	13,880	9%	16%
Further education institutions	315	220	585	10	1,125	28%	15%
<i>Gower College Swansea</i>	10	5	30	0	50	26%	15%
<i>Grwp Llandrillo Menai</i>	275	190	435	0	900	31%	21%
<i>NPTC Group</i>	25	20	120	5	180	16%	13%
All enrolments	8,155	8,215	36,935	6,805	60,110	15%	15%

[Source: HESA Student record via Welsh Government \[View the data\]](#)

Notes:

Numbers based on enrolments for students who are:

1. In the Standard Higher Education registration population
2. Of Welsh domicile
3. Studying in Wales (including the Welsh national centre of the Open University)
4. Studying at undergraduate level

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5

Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Percentages calculations are based on the students whose Welsh speaker status is known.

This means that students with unknown Welsh speaker status are excluded from calculations.

Undergraduate students in Wales by HECOS module subject and Welsh medium teaching status (2021/22)

	Some teaching through Welsh	No teaching through Welsh	Percentage with teaching through Welsh (%)
Medicine and dentistry	250	2,810	8%
Subjects allied to medicine	850	10,755	7%
Biological and sport sciences	275	9,145	3%
Psychology	130	6,035	2%
Veterinary sciences	0	85	0%
Agriculture, food and related studies	115	640	15%
Physical sciences	5	3,020	<1%
Mathematical sciences	35	2,410	1%
Engineering and technology	130	7,385	2%
Computing	150	6,035	2%
Geography, earth and environmental studies	45	2,735	2%
Architecture, building and planning	40	1,755	2%
Social sciences	695	11,790	6%
Law	210	7,210	3%
Business and management	380	13,260	3%
Media, journalism and communications	135	1,525	8%
Language and area studies	265	5,200	5%
Welsh studies	240	10	96%
Other Celtic Language	10	15	37%
Other European Language	5	1,560	<1%
Historical, philosophical and religious studies	160	2,875	5%
Design, and creative and performing arts	895	4,885	15%
Drama	145	515	22%
Music	5	900	1%
Cinematics and photography	110	655	14%
Education and teaching	725	3,475	17%
Teacher Training	150	470	24%
Studies in Education	575	3,010	16%
Combined and general studies	135	1,725	7%
All Subjects	5,630	104,755	5%

[Source: HESA Student record via Welsh Government \[View the data\]](#)

Notes:

Numbers based on enrolments for students who are:

1. In the Standard Higher Education registration population
2. Studying in Wales (including the Welsh national centre of the Open University)
3. Studying at undergraduate level

Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5

Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Subjects reported in Full-Person Equivalents (FPE) split each student across the module subjects they study. If half a student's modules were Maths modules, and half were law modules, they would count as half a student (0.5) studying Maths and half a student studying Law. Once a student's subjects are calculated in FPE, we check if any part of a subject was studied through Welsh. This means if half a student's course is Maths (0.5 FPE), and they study some Maths through the Welsh-medium, then they also count as half a student studying Maths through Welsh (0.5 FPE).

Data for subject of study (or course subject) and module subjects differ. Figures for the two should not be compared.

c. Initial Teacher Education

Welsh Government considers high quality ITE that is fully engaged with the wider education sector an important factor to attracting graduates and ensuring a supply of new teachers into the teaching profession. The reformation of the ITE system in Wales was implemented following the [Teaching Tomorrows' Teachers](#) report. This reform was supported by other interconnected and interdependent reforms including new professional standards, our new curriculum, and changes to student finance.

The [Criteria for the accreditation of ITE programmes in Wales](#) (the 'criteria') set out a model whereby both schools and HEIs have their equal part to play in offering the balance of theoretical and practical input to ensure a high-quality experience for our future teachers. These partnerships extend to schools being an equal partner in the initial development and ongoing quality assurance of their ITE programmes, staff training, and recruitment strategies and activities. Promising teacher preparation (ITE) practices highlighted under the OECD's [Flying Start report](#) highlighted our approach to recognise 'schools as an important partner in the design and delivery of initial teacher education programmes and the creation and use of research' as a strength.

It is important to note the reformed and increased role of schools in Wales' ITE system. The ITE Partnership arrangements between schools and universities support a system that is self-improving with the profession working for its own improvement and for others. Schools within Wales ITE Partnerships are responsible for, and are a vital component of, ensuring ITE student teacher recruitment nationally.

As part of the ITE reforms the Welsh Government procured and continues to support the pan-Wales alternative ITE routes. The Open University (OU) won the contract and developed the [Salaried PGCE](#) and the Part-time PGCE. These PGCE's are intended to support graduates wishing to enter the teaching profession who would not otherwise be able to via 'traditional' full-time PGCE (such as career changers, parents/adult-carers, those from low-income households/backgrounds, and those living in rural areas unable to access a regional university). Both PGCEs have been available since AY2020/21 and analysis undertaken by the OU on their student teachers indicates that they are a unique cohort, representing additional student teachers studying to become a teacher that would not have otherwise been able to do so. The secondary subjects available have been expanded several times in recognition of evidenced demand from applicants and schools and the priorities of Welsh Government. Except for modern foreign languages (and the inclusion of English and Primary) all priority subjects including the sciences can be studied via the Part-time PGCE or Salaried PGCE. Student finance (see section 5b) is available to student teachers studying the Part-time PGCE and we have committed to supporting the student teachers and their employing schools on the Salaried PGCE via grant funding for a further three academic years (2024-25 to 2026-27). This includes the cost of their PGCE, and a level of salary contribution provided to support their employing schools.

We remain committed, that all student teachers, **regardless of ITE route taken, are entitled to, and receive high quality ITE that prepares them to enter the teaching workforce.** All ITE programmes in Wales that award qualified teacher status (QTS) are held to the same high standards via our [evidence informed](#) regulatory framework (see also Welsh Journal of Education: [Furlong, 2016](#), and [Furlong, 2020](#)). This protects against a two-tier workforce and ensures properly prepared, high-quality teachers in Wales' schools.

d. Early career support and professional learning

There is growing recognition that supporting teachers' professional learning from the beginning to the end of their career is critical to fostering high-quality teaching.

Ensuring all practitioners have access to guaranteed career-long professional learning is integral to our vision for education in Wales to ensure that practitioners are supported to develop throughout their careers and remain within the profession.

Newly qualified teachers are supported during their first year of teaching with a funded mentor and a professional learning programme to provide the support they need as they embark on their careers. As part of our early career support package, we also fund a National Masters in Education (MA) for up to 200 individuals per year. I also recently announced the launch of the National Doctorate in Education (EdD) which will be available from January 2025. Together these provide an accredited academic pathway for our practitioners.

The National Professional Learning Entitlement, launched in September 2022, aims to ensure that all practitioners have access to [quality professional learning](#) to enable them to deliver high standards and aspirations for all learners. We continue to provide a total of 6 INSET days and the professional learning grant, worth £12m per annum, to support schools to enable practitioners to engage with professional learning.

e. Teacher Professional Identity

We are currently engaging with OECD on a global [new professionalism research study](#), to inform our ambitions for the future of teaching in Wales. In conjunction with wider research, OECD findings will provide opportunities to raise the profile of teaching as a career, support teacher and teaching assistant retention in schools and settings and positively impact on the experiences of learners as a direct result.

The Curriculum for Wales also presents an opportunity to change perceptions and raise the profile of teaching. This fundamental change not just to what we teach, but how we teach and the understanding of why we teach it, offers a new opportunity to inspire the next generation of teachers to join the profession. The ways of working that underpin the curriculum – teacher creativity, agency, and leadership at all levels – also have the potential to encourage more into the profession. We will continue to showcase what practitioners in Wales are achieving and how they are supporting their learners to reach their potential through the Curriculum for Wales.

f. Teachers' Pay

For teachers' pay and conditions in Wales there is an agreed annual process in place involving a combination of social partnership and independent expertise from the Independent Welsh Pay Review Body (IWPRB). We are fully committed to these social partnership structures and the established process for deciding on teachers' pay and conditions in Wales and continue to address any issues and concerns through our social partnership network with a view to making the teaching profession in Wales an attractive environment which will encourage and support recruitment into the profession.

By taking a social partnership approach and our commitment to 'no detriment' for teachers, we support the teaching profession by ensuring their pay, terms and conditions are designed to best suit the profession here in Wales and currently provide higher salaries and allowances for both new and more experienced teachers than in England.

The agreed annual process has also allowed us to introduce some key changes requested by the profession to further improve the teachers' pay system over the last 4 years. Positive changes have included the reintroduction of pay portability and removal of performance-based pay progression. Last year, we also removed the strict pro-rata principle for TLR allowances making these allowances more accessible and much fairer for part time teachers.

Moving forward, the IWPRBs Strategic Review and recommendations into Teachers' Pay and Conditions was published via a written statement on 9th April 2024 and discussions with stakeholders on the report and recommendations are ongoing. The annual process for Teachers Pay for AY2024/25 is also currently ongoing and will provide us with further opportunities to develop a more distinct national system here in Wales that not only improves and enhances the system but is also fairer and more transparent for all teachers

g. Teacher Wellbeing

Recognising the inextricable link between workload and well-being, we are funding Education Support for the fourth consecutive year. Education Support is a charity with decades of expertise in supporting the education workforce with their mental health and well-being. The wide range of support that Education Support provides includes free advice and support for schools across Wales; bespoke mental health and wellbeing support via their School Wellbeing Service; webinars and workshops; peer to peer support; resilience training, and a dedicated website which has its own range of resources, many of which are accessible in Welsh. Details can be found on the Education Support [Teachers Hub](#).

In March 2021 we published the [Framework on embedding a whole school approach to emotional and mental wellbeing](#). The framework is statutory for all maintained schools and local authorities and is aimed at the needs of school-age learners and the workforce which supports their learning. It seeks to create a supportive environment where young people are encouraged to fulfil their personal and academic potential, where they thrive, learn and emotionally develop, supported by teachers who operate in a culture that equally values their own well-being.

h. Teacher Workload

We recognise the pressures facing education staff, the inextricable link between workload and wellbeing and that workload is cited as one of the main reasons for leaving the profession. During this last year in particular, by taking a social partnership approach, we have undertaken sustained engagement and worked constructively with our key stakeholders, including leadership and teacher unions, to identify and tackle the causes of workload and bureaucracy.

We have restructured and refocused our engagement arrangements with partners around the new, independently chaired, Strategic Workload Coordination Group (SWCG). The SWCG oversees all issues linked to reducing workload and bureaucracy in schools to ensure a consistent and achievable approach. Underpinning this are three working groups focussing on finance; reporting and engagement; and policy development and implementation. All working groups are independently chaired by representatives of our key stakeholders and each group has an action plan, with key deliverables and targets, looking at the particular causes of workload pressure in these areas and focussing on what action can be taken to make tangible change which will reduce burden.

We will continue to work collaboratively and at pace to deliver these practical changes. This includes direct action by Welsh Government as we continue to work internally and with our key stakeholders in developing our workload impact assessment. This considers the potential impact of workload on education staff of any new Welsh Government policies.

By taking this action and continuing to work in partnership, we want to make a real impact at school level, reduce burden and create space for teachers to teach.