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Research Study on the Attractiveness of Teaching, and Retention of Teachers

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Research Study on the Attractiveness of Teaching and Retention of Teachers

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- Primary and secondary school staff and secondary school pupils;
- Universities who helped to organise focus groups, ITE staff, ITE students and undergraduates who took part;
- Stakeholders from a range of different organisations;
- Those who have left the teaching profession.

Glossary

Acronym/Key word	Definition
CEAG providers	Careers, Education, Advice, and Guidance providers
Challenge advisers	A service provided by Regional Education Consortia. Advisers monitor, challenge and support school leadership teams to improve performance.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
Discover Teaching	A national initiative aimed at recruiting and retaining teachers in Wales, launched in March 2017. It is produced and supported collectively by the four Regional Education Consortia and partners (Careers Wales, Education Workforce Council, The Universities Council for the Education of Teachers and Tinint).
EWC	Education Workforce Council: the independent regulator in Wales for teachers in maintained schools, Further Education teachers and learning support staff in both school and FE settings, as well as youth workers and people involved in work-based learning.
GDPR	The GDPR forms part of the data protection regime in the UK, together with the new Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018). The main provisions of this applied, like the GDPR, from 25 May 2018.
Graduate Teacher Programme / GTP	The Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) is a Welsh employment-based route into teaching. Programmes are administered by Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Centres. ITE Centres work with the Regional Education Consortia to use their regional knowledge and expertise in identifying the recruitment needs and priority recruitment areas within their regions to identify which applications to support under the GTP.

ITE	Initial Teacher Education was provided by three ITE Centres in Wales when this research was commissioned. ITE Centres provide programmes consisting of study and time in school for ITE students studying for their PGCE (see below). More information on ITE reform can be found on the EWC website.
Initial Teacher Education Expert Forum	As part of the development of the ITE reform policy an expert group, the ITE Expert Forum, was responsible for providing an expert view on developments, including those targeting recruitment to ITE. As the ITE Reforms are well underway the Forum has come to a close.
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NQT induction	Newly Qualified Teacher: a teacher who has just attained Qualified Teacher Status (QTS, see below) and is now undertaking an induction programme that enables them to be legally employed as a teacher in a maintained school.
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PPA	Time set aside for teachers for planning, preparation and assessment
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status: a professional qualification that is awarded when a person can prove that they meet all of the Teachers' Standards and criteria, for example having completed a PGCE.
Regional Education Consortia	The four Regional Education Consortia work with schools to raise standards in literacy and numeracy, providing a range of support which includes professional development and intervention programmes.
SLT	Senior Leadership Team in a school setting
STEM subjects	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

<p>TRRAB</p>	<p>Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Board: The purpose of the Board is to consider issues of teacher recruitment and retention to support a high-quality education workforce that is vibrant, engaged and committed to continuous learning for all and also able to meet the demands of curriculum and wider education reform.</p>
<p>UCAS</p>	<p>Universities and Colleges Admissions Service</p>
<p>Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)</p>	<p>An index designed to identify the small areas of Wales that are the most deprived. The most recent WIMD was published in 2014. However a selection of indicators used within WIMD are updated in between full index updates.</p>

1. Background

The reform agenda

- 1.1 The Welsh Government is pursuing an ambitious programme of reform of the country's education system. It acknowledges that this is a journey in which 'raising standards and reducing the attainment gap is further strengthened by improvements to student support and the post-compulsory education system' (Welsh Government, 2017, p.6). *Education in Wales: Our National Mission* sets out how the school system will move forward to secure the effective implementation of a new curriculum. This includes a focus on the quality of teachers, as the new curriculum cannot be delivered without a well-supported, aspirational teaching profession. It sets out the vision for a profession that is attractive, with high morale and professional satisfaction.
- 1.2 The reforms to Wales' curriculum and assessment arrangements coincide with the Welsh Government's targets to increase the number of people who speak and live their lives through the medium of Welsh, outlined in *Cymraeg 2050: a million Welsh speakers* (Welsh Government, 2017). This strategy envisages a key role for schools in realising its targets. For this to happen, it will be necessary to increase the number of teachers able to teach Welsh and through the medium of Welsh in primary and secondary schools.

Issues relating to teacher recruitment and retention in Wales

- 1.3 The Welsh Government has existing quantitative data on the numbers of ITE students, the number of teaching vacancies in schools and the number of teachers who leave the profession. The data show that in 2016, 814 teachers left the profession. Although the figures show that the number of teachers leaving the profession has fallen overall since 2007, there has been an increase in the number of teachers leaving since 2012. Outside of retirement, teachers with less than five years' experience are more likely to leave.
- 1.4 In 2017 the Education Workforce Council (EWC) published the outcomes of an analysis of data from its register of education practitioners. It examined a range of issues including recruitment of new teachers and headteachers along with retention.

It concluded that 'The unique data collated from the EWC's register of education practitioners shows that despite there not being a recruitment and retention crisis in Wales, there are concerns in four areas: new teachers, headteachers, Welsh-medium teachers, and teachers of STEM subjects'. (EWC statement, 19 May 2017).

- 1.5 The EWC research found that over 80 per cent of new teachers in Wales were employed on fixed term contracts or on supply work. It also referred to a range of factors affecting recruitment, including the perceptions of the role and workload, the impact of financial incentives, the entry requirements and the number of teachers working outside Wales (including those working outside the UK). It noted that some of the issues identified were also prevalent in other countries.
- 1.6 The EWC emphasised the need to consider factors including:
- Demographic changes in pupil numbers;
 - The Welsh Government's commitment to reducing infant class sizes;
 - The possible impact of devolving teachers' pay and conditions on recruitment and retention;
 - The impact on the education workforce of the Welsh Government's aspiration for a million Welsh speakers by 2050;
 - Changing workforce and professional registration offer opportunities;
 - Curriculum reform.

Pathways to the teaching profession in Wales

- 1.7 At the time this project was carried out, qualified teacher status (QTS) could be obtained by one of two routes:
- A course of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) at one of three collaborative centres (Mid and North Wales, South-west Wales, and South-east Wales) either through an undergraduate route leading to QTS or through a course leading to the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) with QTS;

- Employment-based routes - the Graduate Teacher Programme, Additional Training Graduate Programme (Teach First), and the Registered Teacher Programme (not currently operational).

1.8 The Teacher Training Incentive Scheme provides financial inducements to attract those with specific skills including:

- Teachers in shortage areas;
- Teachers of subjects where there is a shortage of applicants able to teach the subject through the medium of Welsh;
- Teachers able to teach Welsh first language and Welsh second language.¹

Reforming teacher education

1.9 The Welsh Government is addressing the need to reform the structure of both initial and on-going teacher education. Professor John Furlong's report *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers* (Welsh Government, 2015) provided options for the Welsh Government for the future of teacher training delivery. Furlong's report was published following a previous review by Ralph Tabberer and recommendations by Robert Hill which included:

- How to address concern with the quality of what was offered;
- How to ensure that the profession is able to respond to the changes in the nature of what teaching involves and its aims, in particular the importance of skills.

1.10 Parallel with these discussions, there are two related issues which need to be considered:

- The role of CPD, how it can help to 'raise the game' and how it can be strengthened;
- The professional development needs of the broader education workforce, including Teaching Assistants.

¹[The Teacher Training Incentive Scheme 2017](#)

1.11 To move forward the work of reforming teacher education in Wales, the Welsh Government established the Initial Teacher Education Expert Forum to exercise oversight of the reforms to ITE. Part of its work was to monitor the issue of recruitment to ITE and retention of teachers. This work will in future be undertaken by the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Board (TRRAB). The Board's broad areas of responsibility concern workforce planning and ensuring Wales has an education workforce of high quality 'that is vibrant, engaged and committed to continuous learning for all and also able to meet the demands of curriculum and wider education reform' (Welsh Government, 2018)².

1.12 In response to Professor John Furlong's review of initial teacher education in Wales (Welsh Government, 2015), ITE provision has been restructured. From September 2019 all ITE provision will be accredited by the EWC. Its duties in relation to ITE will include:

- Administering the award of QTS;
- Administering funding, tracking and recording arrangements for induction, the Masters in Educational Practice (MEP), and Early Professional Development (EPD);
- Developing and hosting the Professional Learning Passport;
- Hearing induction appeals and the issuing of induction certificates;
- Accrediting programmes of initial teacher education.

1.13 The EWC's ITE Accreditation Board invited programme proposals to provide ITE programmes which have subsequently resulted in partnerships across Wales as outlined in the table below.

Provider	Primary undergraduate	Primary postgraduate	Secondary postgraduate
CaBan - Chester(Caer) / Bangor North Wales Partnership	√	√	√
Cardiff Partnership	√	√	√
Yr Athrofa: Professional Learning Partnership	√	√	√
Aberystwyth ITE Partnership		√	√

² [Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Board meets for the first time](#)

1.14 However, at the time of writing the new structure of provision was in the process of being established. This research is based on evidence collected at the time when ITE provision was delivered through the following three ITE Centres

- North and Mid Wales Centre for Teacher Education and training, provided by Bangor University and Aberystwyth University;
- South West Wales Centre for Teacher Education, provided by University of Wales, Trinity St David at Swansea and Carmarthen;
- South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training, provided by the University of South Wales and Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Rationale for undertaking the research

1.15 As noted above, the Welsh Government has set out an ambitious vision for the education and training system, modelled on the practices of internationally high-performing systems, tailored to the Welsh context. To achieve this vision, it will be necessary to ensure that a strong pool of high-quality entrants is attracted to and remain in the profession, and develop as leaders within the system.

1.16 The targets outlined in Cymraeg 2050 create a further dimension to the issue of the recruitment and retention of teachers. It will create a demand for teachers with existing skills to teach Welsh across all settings and to teach other subjects in Welsh-medium settings. It will also offer opportunities for people to develop or consolidate those skills.

1.17 The effective delivery of reforms to the education system relies on a well-supported, aspirational teaching profession. It is crucial that Wales retains its teachers and encourages those who have the potential to make a difference to pupils to choose to pursue a career in teaching.

Aims and objectives of the research

- 1.18 The overall aims of the research were to explore the following:
- What factors encourage individuals to pursue a teaching career in Wales;
 - What factors discourage individuals from considering pursuing a teaching career in Wales;
 - What factors contribute to teachers in Wales remaining in the profession;
 - What factors contribute to teachers in Wales leaving the profession.
- 1.19 The objectives centred on:
- **What attracts people into teaching:** the factors that encourage individuals to pursue a teaching career; positive and negative perceptions among young people of teaching as a career option; their understanding of routes into teaching and advice; information young people access about routes to a teaching career; and what ITE providers do to attract the best candidates;
 - **Retention:** the factors that support successful completion of NQT induction; the factors that support engagement and commitment; and the factors that can lead individuals to consider leaving, or to leave, the profession;
 - **The Welsh language:** what Welsh speaking young people think about teaching as a career; how Welsh speaking young people view the relevance of their linguistic skills to a teaching career; and how young people who may not be fluent Welsh speakers, or who may not be receiving their education through the medium of Welsh, perceive the possibility of being able to use their Welsh language skills in a teaching career;
 - Identifying **implications** from the research findings.
- 1.20 More detailed question areas were put forward by Welsh Government under each of these main objectives. These areas and subsequent discussion with Welsh Government were used to design topic guides which covered the main objective areas.
- 1.21 This report incorporates the findings from the primary research with participants as well as contextual evidence from existing literature on the attractiveness of teaching and the retention of teachers. The role of the Welsh language is also considered

across the chapters including perceptions among qualified teachers and young people of using Welsh in a career in teaching; and experiences and perceptions among ITE students regarding Welsh language support³.

- 1.22 Chapter 2 provides detail on the methodology used to meet the aims of the research and covers the approach to the literature review and the main qualitative stage. It also covers an online survey among teachers which was used to help find those who had left or were seriously considering leaving the profession, as well as to provide limited quantitative data on the key topics.
- 1.23 Chapter 3 provides a high-level summary of the key findings from the research: what factors attract people to teach; what factors keep teachers teaching; what factors can cause doubt about continuing to teach; and the Welsh language and a career in teaching.
- 1.24 Chapter 4 gives a short overview of the key points from the existing data and literature reviews. More detailed content on the reviews is integrated into the remaining relevant sections of the report.
- 1.25 Chapter 5 explores the attractiveness of teaching as a career including: what motivates individuals to want to teach; the perceived benefits and drawbacks associated with teaching among school pupils and undergraduates; perceptions of the status of teaching as a profession; the perspective of ITE Centre staff on attracting candidates and the challenges Centres can face; and challenges schools can face with recruitment.
- 1.26 Chapter 6 turns to the theme of retention from the point of view of qualified teachers, those who are training to teach and stakeholders. It considers the factors that support commitment to continue teaching as well as the factors that are believed to cause doubts about remaining in the profession. This chapter also includes views from teachers who had decided to leave the profession.
- 1.27 Chapter 7 consists of the report authors' conclusions based on the research findings. Finally, chapter 8 summarises implications from the research, for consideration.

³[Evaluation of Welsh-Medium provision in Initial Teacher Education](#)

2. Methodology

Overview

- 2.1 The main approach used for the research was a qualitative method, supported with a review of existing literature. A quantitative online survey among teachers was also carried out.
- 2.2 Qualitative research was chosen as the primary research method because it provided an effective means of exploring the objectives in more detail across a broad range of participants and topics than would be possible via other means. In addition, there is currently limited primary qualitative research available in Wales on these topics in terms of what currently motivates people to want to teach, what keeps them teaching and what might cause them to consider leaving. More specifically, the advantages of this method included the ability to probe participants' comments and obtain examples to illustrate the points being made on complex issues. Participants are also able to raise what is important to them. A quantitative approach alone would not have provided the richness and illustrations contained in this report.
- 2.3 The potential drawbacks of a qualitative approach centre on the limited ability to draw conclusive inferences, as it is a smaller sample than could be achieved via a quantitative approach. Qualitative investigation is not designed to be statistically representative. It is intended to provide in-depth understanding which was required for exploring the factors that influence engagement with teaching. Its strengths lie in the ability to identify themes across diverse groups and experiences, the prevalence of certain issues and alignment of themes around this multifaceted topic. Where lists of points made by participants are provided, they are organised in alphabetical order unless otherwise stated, indicating that the points were not dominant themes. Bold text is used in the report to identify themes and change of topic.
- 2.4 Anonymous verbatim comments made by participants are included throughout this report. These comments should not be interpreted as defining the views of all. Instead they give insight into individual views on the points identified. Comments are provided bilingually where the conversations were in the medium of Welsh. Each comment has an attribution which indicates the type of participant.

- 2.5 Where more than one participant contributes to a verbatim comment they are denoted by, for example, 'P1' and 'P2'.

Existing data and literature reviews

Contextualising the issue

- 2.6 At the outset of the project the research team conducted a focused review of relevant literature. The aim was to contextualise the data gathering and to identify the key issues on teacher recruitment and retention, identify key patterns and trends, and consider the kind of strategies which have proved effective in attracting entrants to the profession and retaining teachers.
- 2.7 The NFER Library conducted a search of relevant publications on effective ways to attract and retain teachers. This enabled the project team to conduct a review of 15 publications based on a targeted selection of key reviews and reports to examine the top-level findings of existing literature reviews supplemented by the findings from recent studies relevant to the Welsh context.

The evidence base

- 2.8 A total of 37 items were identified through the literature search.⁴ The initial literature examined did not provide in-depth evidence about the effectiveness of financial incentives nor about the use of recruitment campaigns. Additional information was, however, obtained from the supplementary literature search.
- 2.9 The geographic coverage of the items identified are mainly the United Kingdom (primarily England), together with USA, Canada (e.g. Alberta) and Australia. The outcomes of the search on the use of incentives identified work focused exclusively on practice in the USA, where differences in educational systems, student support mechanisms and other factors mean that it is not possible to draw direct and reliable comparisons with the situation in Wales.

⁴ [British Education Index](#), [ERIC](#), [ProQuest](#)

- 2.10 The evidence gathered relates to the following broad themes:
- The extent of attrition and its impact on schools;
 - The impact of teachers' motivations for becoming a teacher on their likelihood to stay;
 - The impact of schools' socio-economic characteristics on teachers' needs and behaviours;
 - Comparisons of experiences of early career teachers / more experienced teachers;
 - The importance of ITE and CPD and its impact on teacher retention;
 - The importance of nurturing / developing teachers' resilience;
 - Key features of effective retention strategies.
- 2.11 The evidence base on effective strategies to recruit and retain members of the teaching profession is not strong. Several studies (especially those published in Australia) emphasise that this is a field that is emerging. Much of the research base draws on mainly qualitative small-scale studies, and there were few large-scale surveys. Moreover, the surveys cited evidence from hundreds rather than thousands of teachers. This suggests that the knowledge base on this subject is evolving.
- 2.12 The evidence base on the use of incentives to attract people to the teaching profession is also weak and further research is required to develop an understanding of this issue.
- 2.13 The focused literature review was supplemented by an examination of the evidence about teacher recruitment and retention issues in Wales. In particular, the research team considered the analysis produced by the EWC in May 2017 (EWC, Recruitment, retention and career progression of school teachers in Wales, 2017) and considered the international evidence in the light of its key messages about Wales.

Primary research method and sample

- 2.14 The qualitative element was designed to obtain feedback from a broad range of participants across Wales: teachers, ITE students, ITE staff, 'A' Level pupils, undergraduates, those who had left the profession (or were seriously considering it) and stakeholders. Detail on the qualitative sample is provided in Annex A.
- 2.15 199 participants contributed in total. The sample **consisted** of:
- **Visits to 16 schools**
 - Eight primary schools for focus groups with staff - three of the schools were Welsh medium
 - Eight secondary schools for focus groups with staff and separately with 'A' Level pupils – three of the schools were Welsh medium
 - **Visits to three ITE Centres** to conduct a focus group with staff and a focus group with ITE students;
 - **Three focus groups with undergraduates** who were not studying to be teachers;
 - **20 in-depth phone interviews with teachers who had left or were seriously considering leaving** the teaching profession;
 - **24 stakeholders** through a combination of in-depth phone interviews, focus groups and a face to face interview.
- 2.16 The research also included an **online survey** for qualified teachers. The survey was developed to help identify leavers. It also provided high level quantitative data on what attracted respondents to teach, what motivated them to continue teaching and what might cause them to consider leaving.
- 2.17 The survey was administered online and shared primarily via Welsh Government communication channels such as social media and the sector newsletter Dysg. In total, 1,945 responses were received. Where relevant, figures from the survey are included in the report. It should be noted that the survey data is unweighted but the profile of the sample achieved is broadly representative of the universe of teachers in Wales (see Annex A) where comparative data is available. The report highlights

where caution is needed with the survey findings. The survey results generally reflect the qualitative findings.

- 2.18 The research tools (recruitment documents and topic guides) were developed with Welsh Government. The topic guides allowed for free-flowing discussions so that relevant themes of importance to participants could emerge spontaneously. Each topic guide was adapted for different participants described above.
- 2.19 In relation to analysis, the focus groups and interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission. A combination of transcripts and detailed notes were used as the basis for the analysis which was supported with NVivo software. The software enables the user to create codes into which the comments made in a focus group or interview are organised. An inductive approach to the analysis was used whereby the researcher codes the data and develops themes that emerge from the content of the focus groups and interviews. These codes were broadly framed within the key research objectives of exploring motivations to teach and its attractiveness; and what keeps individuals in the profession or might cause them to consider leaving.
- 2.20 Descriptive analysis and open coding helped to identify codes relevant to the objectives and to develop and conceptualise the themes within the data. Codes applied to the data also included the attributes and characteristics of participant type (primary / secondary school teachers including NQT induction, teachers leaving the profession, pupils, undergraduates, ITE staff, ITE students and stakeholders), so that the thematic analysis could be categorised by these different groups of interest. The analysis did not identify any differences in findings on attraction and retention by region, level of deprivation, or proportions of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) pupils. The mix within each focus group of different participant characteristics meant that it was not always possible to take into account at the analysis stage characteristics such as lifestage and subjects taught or studied.
- 2.21 The different stages of fieldwork took place March to July 2018 with a delayed individual interview taking place in August.

3. Summary of the key findings

3.1 Across the different groups of participants, the teaching profession generally was felt to be not as **well respected, valued or marketed** as it could be. This issue was believed to adversely affect the attractiveness of teaching as a career.

Overall objective: what motivates people / young people to want to teach

3.2 The diagram below highlights the themes to emerge on what attracts individuals to pursue a career in teaching. The first two themes were the more prevalent overall.

Teaching as a vocation	A prominent factor across the sample (and recognised by ITE staff), particularly among primary school teachers. Also referred to among young people.
Making a positive difference to pupils	Also a key theme across different types of participant from 'A' Level pupils to experienced primary and secondary teachers (and recognised by ITE staff).

Further motivating factors to teach:

<i>The experience of having worked with children / young people.</i>	The experience of having worked with children / young people.
<i>Wanting a career change to a profession that felt more worthwhile.</i>	A factor raised among primary and secondary teachers as well as ITE students and staff.
<i>Ability to continue and share a passion for a subject.</i>	Present among 'A' Level pupils, ITE students and secondary school teachers (and recognised by ITE staff).
<i>Ability to share a passion for the Welsh language and to help it flourish.</i>	Raised among some Welsh speaking ITE students and secondary school teachers (and recognised by ITE staff).
<i>The influence of an inspirational teacher while a pupil at school.</i>	Present across different participant types (and recognised by ITE staff).

Suggestions among participants for improving the attractiveness of teaching

<i>Improve the image of teaching</i>	Raised mainly among teachers, stakeholders, ITE staff and students and undergraduates.
<i>Address the perceived issues with workload</i>	Raised among teachers, stakeholders, ITE staff and undergraduates.

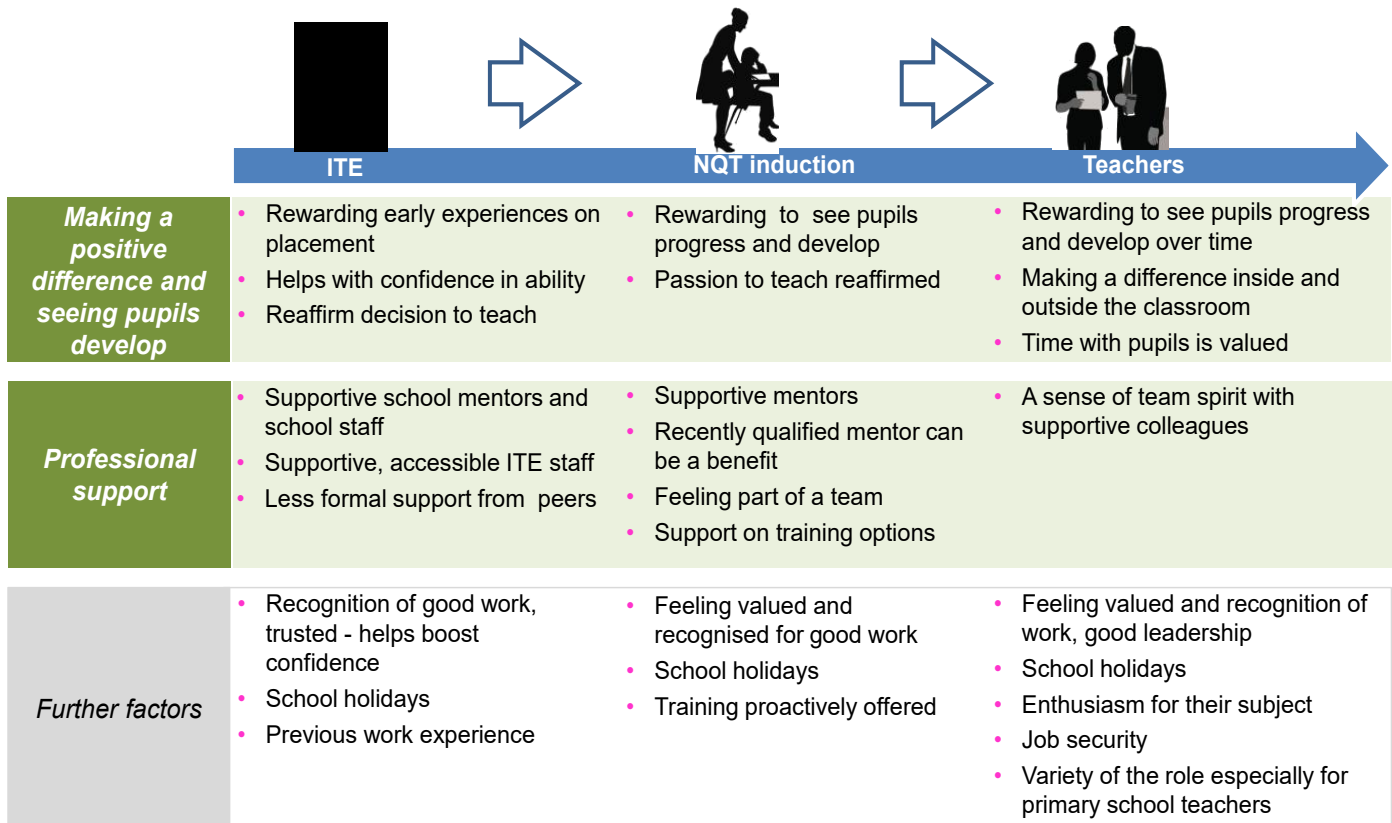
Further suggestions made:

<i>Explore how to target potential candidates more effectively.</i>	Raised among stakeholders and ITE.
<i>Finance-related suggestions (such as matching England's financial incentives to train to teach or offering a better starting salary).</i>	Raised among teachers, ITE staff and students, stakeholders, 'A' level pupils and undergraduates.
<i>Strengthening partnership working across schools, ITE Centres and universities.</i>	Raised among ITE staff.

Overall objective: teacher retention and what can cause teachers to leave the profession

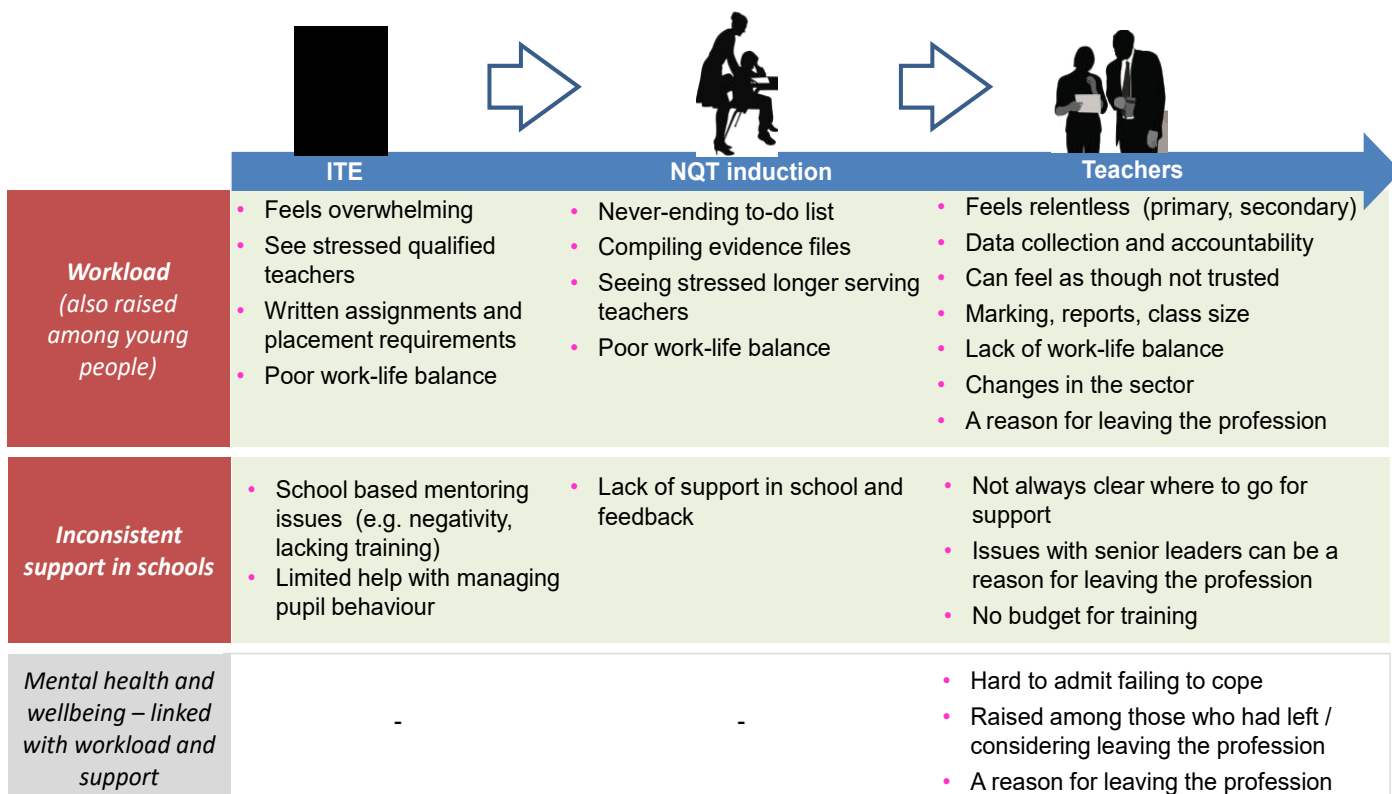
Factors that helped to strengthen a commitment to teach

- 3.3 Two main themes were identified: **making a positive difference** and seeing pupils develop; and **professional development**. The diagram overleaf summarises how these themes applied across the different participant types.



Factors that can cause doubt about continuing to teach

3.4 The most dominant theme to emerge concerned **workload**. **Inconsistent support** in schools was a common theme as well.



- 3.5 Suggestions among participants for improving teacher retention resulted in two common themes: **addressing workload issues**; and **improving the consistency of support** available (e.g. from mentors for ITE students and during NQT induction).

Overall objective: the Welsh language and a career in teaching

- 3.6 Perceptions of teaching among Welsh speaking young people **reflected those of the young people in the sample as a whole** as well as what they would want from a career. For a career in teaching, Welsh language skills were sometimes viewed as a benefit to the individual (more opportunities within teaching) as well as a means to help the language to flourish, provided they were confident in their skills.
- 3.7 Concerns regarding the Welsh language did not arise as key themes among young people who were not fluent Welsh speakers.
- 3.8 An issue with **confidence** in Welsh language skills emerged as a theme among Welsh-medium pupils (also noted by ITE staff) that could cause them to think twice about teaching in the medium of Welsh.
- 3.9 Growing numbers of alternative career opportunities for Welsh speaking graduates were thought by ITE staff and stakeholders to make it more challenging to attract Welsh speakers into the profession.

4. Summary of the key issues about teacher recruitment and retention from the existing data and literature reviews

- 4.1 The issue of 'attrition' within the teaching profession is experienced across the countries examined in the literature. Studies from England, Australia, The Netherlands and the USA suggest that up to half of all entrants to teaching choose to leave in the first five years (for example, Dias-Lacy and Guirguis, 2017, Krasnoff, 2014). The pattern is influenced by variation at country, locality and individual school level. Where turnover is highest, it can have implications for school standards and the quality of the teaching and learning.
- 4.2 The published research refers to the influence of staff turnover on the continuity of learners' experiences, and on the consistency of teachers' expectations of learners. It also impacts on school organisation, especially where schools have to revise organisational structures on a regular basis to replace staff who have left, to ensure appropriate line management and CPD arrangements are in place. At the same time, a high turnover of staff can reduce the pool of staff from which future senior and middle leaders can be drawn (Beltman, 2011, Krasnoff, 2014).
- 4.3 The studies examined for this review emphasise that practitioners' reasons for leaving vary and their decisions are influenced by factors such as:
- Their initial motivations for becoming a teacher;
 - The quality of initial preparation for the profession and subsequent professional development opportunities;
 - Issues of school governance and leadership;
 - Matters related to teaching and learning;
 - The level of professional support enjoyed by practitioners.

5. The attractiveness of teaching as a career

- 5.1 The opening section of this chapter centres on what first attracted ITE students and qualified teachers into the teaching profession. In addition, findings from the literature review on incentives are discussed. Results from the online survey, which broadly echo the qualitative findings, are included as well.
- 5.2 The chapter then explores perceptions of teaching as a career voiced among young people: 'A' Level pupils and undergraduates not studying to be teachers. It also considers views on how the profession is perceived generally.
- 5.3 This chapter then describes findings from ITE Centre staff on attracting students and the challenges they can face. The difficulties schools can face recruiting to certain roles are also covered. The chapter concludes with examples of suggested improvements put forward by participants to improve the attractiveness of teaching. Stakeholder views are also incorporated into the chapter where appropriate.

Factors that attract individuals to want to teach

- 5.4 Existing evidence from the literature review suggests that there is an important link between an individual's decision to become a teacher and whether they stay in the profession. Those most likely to stay were reported to have entered teaching out of a sense of mission and a commitment to enabling children to fulfil their potential and also the joy of being with children (Adrianzen, 2012, Beltman, 2011, Cruickshank, 2012, Berry and Eckert 2012). At the same time, the potential for creativity in the role of a teacher is emphasised by Bland et al (2014) who note that 'for many professionals, the field of education has an appeal to those who are bored with the mundane routine of their current job'. Some of the studies also suggest that the potential for career advancement and the financial reward of teaching was less important for some of those who took a decision to stay in the profession for the longer term.
- 5.5 Turning to the primary research for this project, 'A' Level pupils and undergraduates who were interested in teaching as a career voiced similar motivations as ITE students and teachers for wanting to pursue this career. These included in particular

seeing **teaching as a vocation** and wanting to **make a difference**. Views among 'A' Level pupils and undergraduates are explored further on page 35.

- 5.6 The report now explores the motivating themes among qualified teachers and ITE students.

Teaching as a vocation

- 5.7 A common motivating theme across the sample, particularly primary school teachers, was that teaching was considered a vocation, in keeping with the literature review. ITE staff also recognised this motivation among their students. Some participants had wanted to teach since a young age or at least to take on a caring role of some kind and to be able to help others. Such recollections tended to occur among female participants. Some of these participants had family members who were teachers who had influenced their desire to want to teach, for example hearing about how a parent had helped a pupil to develop. This theme was echoed by ITE staff where reference was made to how these students were very likely to have obtained as much experience as possible before beginning their studies.

“I just always wanted to do that, I just liked children, babies, anything like that, helping.” (Primary school teacher)

Opportunity to make a positive difference

- 5.8 Linking in with this theme and the literature review, the ability to make a positive difference through teaching was a strongly motivating factor for some participants, from A' Level pupils interested in teaching through to experienced primary and secondary teachers looking back on their entry into teaching. ITE staff had noted its influence as well.

“I think as well, you feel like you're doing something worthwhile. That was a big thing for me because before, I was working as a waitress. I didn't hate the job but you just think like, I can't care that much about people's chips. . . . I've put a lot of time and effort into this but someone else has got something out of it as well.” (ITE student)

The impact of working with young people and children

5.9 A further factor that regularly emerged among young people, ITE students and primary and secondary school teachers, which sparked an interest in teaching, was an experience working with young people or children that might have occurred at school, university or having completed a degree (also highlighted among ITE staff). Some participants gave examples of discovering how much they enjoyed their involvement helping with activities such as Brownies, Cubs, part-time work helping vulnerable children and international camps for young people.

“I finished my degree and then I went to do Camp America. . . . I had no desire to be a teacher. . . . I really enjoyed working with young people, so then when I came back I decided to look into doing a PGCE after that. But before I did Camp America, I had no desire to be a teacher, it was just through that experience.” (Secondary school teacher)

5.10 In other instances, participants on occasion recalled how they had discovered that they were quite adept at helping classmates to understand aspects of Maths, for example. In a final example, a taster experience via a module as an undergraduate had convinced one ITE student that teaching was the career to pursue.

5.11 According to some ITE staff, some students had strengthened their commitment to teach by spending time in schools before the PGCE course, for example as Teaching Assistants, Learning Support Assistants and ‘cover supervisors’. ITE staff at one Centre reported that they were seeing more students who had taken this preparatory step before their PGCE.

Switching to a more fulfilling career

5.12 Some primary and secondary school teachers and ITE students had previously worked in professions such as banking, consumer products, design / manufacturing, engineering, entertainment, hospitality, marketing, recruitment and sport.

5.13 For some, therefore, the decision to choose a teaching career came slightly later in life. There were instances where participants had been in unfulfilling work roles in other sectors and felt that there was something missing, for example variety, a new challenge and a desire to learn (this theme emerged in the literature review as well).

There was also a sense for some that they had nothing worthwhile to show for their work in different sectors.

“I’d lost [motivation] in that other career so I was hungry for something you know? And I think that’s the beauty of teaching, it’s instant, you feel it don’t you when something goes well in a classroom.” (ITE student)

- 5.14 In one ITE staff group, however, participants sensed that they were seeing fewer mature students and surmised that it might be to do with ‘financial barriers’. Considering this point further, some ITE staff in the same group wondered if the financial challenges associated with teaching meant that although applications might be down, the commitment of those training might be stronger as they would be driven by the vocational element, the desire to make a difference and where relevant the love of their subject.

Continuing and sharing a love of their subject

- 5.15 For some ITE students and secondary school teachers, a love of their subject had helped to attract them to secondary school teaching. Similarly, ITE staff came across this factor among their students.
- 5.16 It was deemed to be a good way of maintaining a passion for a subject while at the same time, for some participants, aiming to inspire others to enjoy the subject as well. For one secondary school science teacher, it would have been a waste to her to have spent all those years learning about the subject but not using it to inspire others. This factor featured prominently in the online survey.

“Oedd brwdfrydedd ag angerdd tuag at y pwnc [Saesneg], a darllen a llyfrau, felly o’n i’n edrych at ryw ffordd o barhau hynny. Y pwnc oedd mwy o ddylanwad nag unigolion, o’n i eisiau esgus i barhau darllen.” (“My enthusiasm and passion towards the subject [English], and reading books, I was looking for some way of continuing that. The subject was more influential than any individual; I wanted an excuse to continue reading books.”) (Secondary school teacher)

Love of the Welsh language

- 5.17 Related to the theme of a passion for a subject as a motivating factor, there were cases where Welsh speakers among ITE students and secondary school teachers saw teaching in Welsh as a means keeping the language alive and helping it to flourish. This was particularly important where the Welsh language was considered to be a key part of one's identity. The 'privilege' of being able to speak Welsh every day as part of a job was also a factor, according to one teacher. This element of attraction through the Welsh language had been noted as a factor by ITE staff at one Centre as well.

“Mae'r angerdd yna, chi'n gweld pa mor bwysig yw e i'r diwylliant i'r wlad fach yma, a pa mor bwysig yw e i gadw'r traddodiadau a'r holl sgiliau yna sydd ynghlwm ag ysgol Cymraeg.” (“The passion is there, you can see how important it is for the culture in this small country, and how important it is to keep traditions and all the skills that are associated with Welsh schools.”)
(Secondary school teacher)

- 5.18 Combining the themes of a passion for Welsh and wanting to make a difference, an ITE student studying Welsh had not been impressed with the curriculum at school and was concerned about the image of the language generally. He therefore saw teaching as an opportunity to 'inject some energy and enthusiasm into it'. However, he was finding that at GCSE he had 'zero control' over what he taught and was frustrated at the perceived dated materials he worked with (for example having to use a film from the 1980s). It felt 'mind-numbing', 'the kids don't care' and it did not feel like 'fostering independent learning'.

Inspirational teachers

- 5.19 Inspirational teachers at primary and secondary school were sometimes highlighted as having drawn participants to the profession, from young people with an interest in the career through to qualified teachers. Looking back on the positive impact a teacher had, these participants wanted to provide pupils with a similarly positive experience. Some ITE staff also referred to how influential inspiring teachers could be and highlighted them as an important 'marketing' asset for teacher attraction.

“Dwi’n meddwl nes i benderfynu pan o’n i’n ‘neud TGAU achos oedd gennai athrawes Ffrangeg rili rili da. A ‘naeth hi kind of helpu fi fynd trwy TGAU, mynd trwy Lefel ‘A’ a ballu.” (“I think I decided when I was doing my GCSEs because I had a really good French teacher. She helped me get through my GCSEs and ‘A’ levels and stuff.”) (ITE student)

- 5.20 In one example, the way in which a teacher had invested a good deal of time and effort in the participant added to his sense of duty that he should give something back, especially as he admitted that his behaviour had been quite challenging at school. He had not been that interested in Welsh and did not come from a Welsh speaking family. Whatever the subject, he would have followed it based on the inspiring teacher.

Less prevalent themes on motivations to want to teach

- 5.21 Additional, **less prevalent** themes that attracted individuals to want to teach are provided below, covering: uncertainty over what else to do for a career; life-stage or a change in circumstances; job security and conditions; a career to aspire to; and financial incentives to train to teach. These sections are ordered broadly in terms of their prevalence.

Uncertainty over what else to do for a career

- 5.22 The interest in teaching was not initially as strong for some participants who acknowledged that they had chosen to teach because they were uncertain what else they could do, for example with an arts degree coming to an end or simply wanting to stay on in academia. This theme arose among qualified teachers rather than among ITE students, although ITE staff commented that they still encountered such students.

Life-stage as a parent

- 5.23 Life-stage or a change in circumstances had the potential to attract individuals to want to teach, according to a small number of primary school teachers and ITE students. This theme was raised among female participants with examples given of

becoming a parent and subsequently taking an interest in the child's education. Furthermore, having been a full-time parent for some time, teaching provided an opportunity to be challenged intellectually once more.

- 5.24 In another example, a primary school teacher was keen to ensure her child received a Welsh-medium education. She had moved back to Wales from the South East of England and switched to teaching to fit with the parenting role as well as to pursue what was deemed a more rewarding career.

Job security and conditions

- 5.25 The perceived job security associated with teaching was an influencing factor on occasion among secondary school teachers and ITE students. Some stated that there would always be a need for teachers, or at least for specific subjects like Maths. It also emerged among motivations to teach in the online survey. This factor sometimes tied in with the theme of uncertainty over what else to pursue as a career.
- 5.26 In addition – and linking in with the life-stage theme above - teaching was attractive to parents of young children on occasion because of the hours and holidays which suited childcare responsibilities. More generally, there were instances where teachers and ITE students acknowledged that the prospect of teachers' holidays had been a contributing factor to their decision to teach.
- 5.27 Some ITE students commented on how the longer holidays had seemed more attractive than the holiday allowance received in other professions which was expected to make it difficult to forget about work for a while and to fully 'recover'. A student with childcare commitments considered the holidays to be 'a massive draw' for her.

A career to aspire to

- 5.28 A further motivating factor occasionally raised by participants was the desire to achieve more than previous family generations had and to escape a troubled upbringing. Teaching had therefore provided a way out as well as a means of

helping other children achieve their full potential. For these individuals, it was a professional status to be proud of: 'I wanted out. I wanted to be different. I wanted to be better'.

Financial incentives to train to teach

- 5.29 Participants were not recruited on the basis of whether or not they had received or were receiving financial incentives to train. Any incentives received among participants were not systematically recorded although the sample did contain some individuals teaching and studying subjects that would attract more significant incentives. The findings from this section must therefore be treated with caution as there is not a robust representation of the range of financial incentives on offer in Wales. The literature review also explored this topic, the findings from which follow on from this discussion and indicate limited evidence on incentives.
- 5.30 A final factor occasionally raised spontaneously as a contributing motivation to teach was the financial incentive on offer to train to teach a priority subject at secondary school. As an example, a recently qualified teacher stated how the incentive, together with a waning interest in his original career plan, had convinced him to choose to teach. Similarly, an ITE STEM student stated that the primary attraction had been the financial incentive to train as a science teacher – it had been 'too good to turn down'. Another participant revealed how he would not have gone on to train to teach if he had not achieved a first class degree and therefore been eligible for the highest level incentive.
- 5.31 Some perceived the financial incentives on offer as a mechanism to help ensure those who wanted to teach could afford to do so. Incentives were described among ITE students as a 'bonus', for example.
- 5.32 It was occasionally pointed out among ITE students that it could be quite demoralising to be on a course with a student who had received a significant financial incentive in contrast to what the participant was receiving. Also, degree attainment was not always felt to be a fair reflection of how effective a teacher the student would be. A recipient of a large financial incentive acknowledged that he felt

awkward when around other students working just as hard who received a smaller financial incentive.

- 5.33 The views on financial incentives among 'A' Level pupils and undergraduates are provided later on page 42.

Literature review: the use of incentives

- 5.34 The literature highlighted a small number of USA studies where a range of different incentives had been introduced to help to attract entrants to the profession. The evidence base included examples from the State of New York, Tennessee, and Florida. There are important differences in education policy and the way students access post-compulsory learning in the USA. In particular the use of the term 'loans' does not necessarily refer to the same thing in Wales as it does in the USA.
- 5.35 The incentives that were examined in the literature had been **introduced to address three distinct issues**. First, difficulties which particular areas, including some with high concentrations of deprivation and some isolated rural communities, had experienced in recruiting and then *retaining* teachers during the first three to five years of their careers. Second, some of the initiatives were designed to respond to evidence that in some areas the 'best-rated' teachers (identified through a range of performance indicators) were most likely to leave the profession. Third, incentivising teachers was seen as a way of aligning teacher salaries with those offered by competing employers, especially in subjects where alternative employment opportunities attracted people who might otherwise have entered the teaching profession.
- 5.36 The **methods used** in the examples examined in the USA to provide incentives to new teachers or potential entrants to the profession varied. They included:
- The use of bonus payments, such as a 'signing bonus' to provide additional remuneration to encourage staff to teach in schools experiencing difficulty in certain subjects or localities where recruitment was an issue;
 - Use of 'loan forgiveness', where loans taken out by entrants to the teaching profession as undergraduates are written off (as noted above it is important to

differentiate between the use of loans in the US and the maintenance loans in Wales and that the terminology does not necessarily refer to the same practices);

- The use of bursaries paid to entrants to the teaching profession.

(Bland et al, 2014, Aragocochrn, 2016).

5.37 These incentives offered to those entering the profession operate alongside incentives used to encourage existing teachers to move to schools that experience difficulties in recruiting staff or staff in certain subjects. These latter methods include:

- Providing financial incentives to teachers with a proven track record of success to move to different schools (e.g. schools with a high level of socio-economic deprivation, or those which find it hard to recruit);
- Paying differentiated salaries that vary by subject / area in order to recruit to hard-to-fill vacancies.

(Steele, et al, 2012, Feng and Sass, 2018).

5.38 The evidence reviewed on **the impact** of the use of incentives on teacher retention is not sufficient to provide a reliable indicator of what strategies work in different contexts. For example, while Bland, et al (2014) refer to the use of 'loan forgiveness' they provide little information about the effectiveness of the method.

5.39 Feng and Sass (2018), who examined a state-wide programme to increase the supply of teachers in areas which found it difficult to recruit, concluded that 'loan forgiveness' had been effective as a means of retaining practitioners in the schools they examined. They concluded that 'employing a difference-in-difference estimator we find that the loan forgiveness component of the program was effective, reducing mean attrition rates for middle and high school math and science teachers by 10.4 percent and 8.9 percent, respectively. We also find that the impact of loan forgiveness varied with the generosity of payments; when fully funded, the program reduced attrition of special education teachers by 12.3 percent, but did not have a statistically significant impact when funding was substantially reduced' (Feng and Sass, 2018). They argue that loan forgiveness 'did have substantial positive effects

on the likelihood an individual would remain in teaching' and that 'the effects vary across subjects and depend in part on the magnitude of payments'. This was evident in four of seven subjects they examined. They also found that the 'one-time retention bonus offered to high school teachers in designated subject area decreased teacher attrition in the targeted areas by as much as 25 percent'.

- 5.40 However, Feng and Sass acknowledged that overall the evidence about the effectiveness of such approaches to teacher recruitment and retention is limited (Feng and Sass, 2018). They also warn that the benefits of many of the financial incentive schemes may be short-lived. This includes evidence that some teachers move on as soon as the bonuses come to an end, where those are paid for a defined period of time (Feng and Sass (2018).
- 5.41 Moreover, Berry and Eckert (2012) suggest that incentives by themselves are inadequate to address recruitment issues. They argue that 'large-scale studies and an increasing number of teacher testimonies suggest that working conditions are far more important than bonuses in persuading teachers to stay or leave their classrooms' (Berry and Eckert, 2012). Any financial incentives therefore need to be introduced alongside other measures to attract and retain high-quality teachers.
- 5.42 Some studies (including Berry and Eckert, 2012 and Glazerman et al, 2015) examined whether financial incentives had any impact on pupil outcomes, concluding that the evidence was inconclusive. Some evidence suggests that it has more impact in elementary schools than middle schools where the impact was found to be negligible (Glazerman et al, 2015). Further research is required before reliable conclusions can be drawn on whether providing incentives to promote recruitment has any impact on the quality of teaching and learning and whether it promotes learners' attainment.

Motivations to teach and perceptions of teachers' pay

- 5.43 When discussing the factors that motivated them to teach, qualified teachers and ITE students in this research did not identify teachers' pay as a key motivation to want to teach. It was, however, occasionally noted as a reasonable salary among ITE students that contributed to the overall attraction of teaching as a career choice.

The prompted factor of 'Pay and conditions' was not commonly chosen as a factor in the online survey either.

"I don't think anyone truly comes into teaching for the financial rewards, because when you first start it's not great and I think it's only when you progress with experience and move up the pay scale that you start to feel the rewards a lot more." (Secondary school teacher)

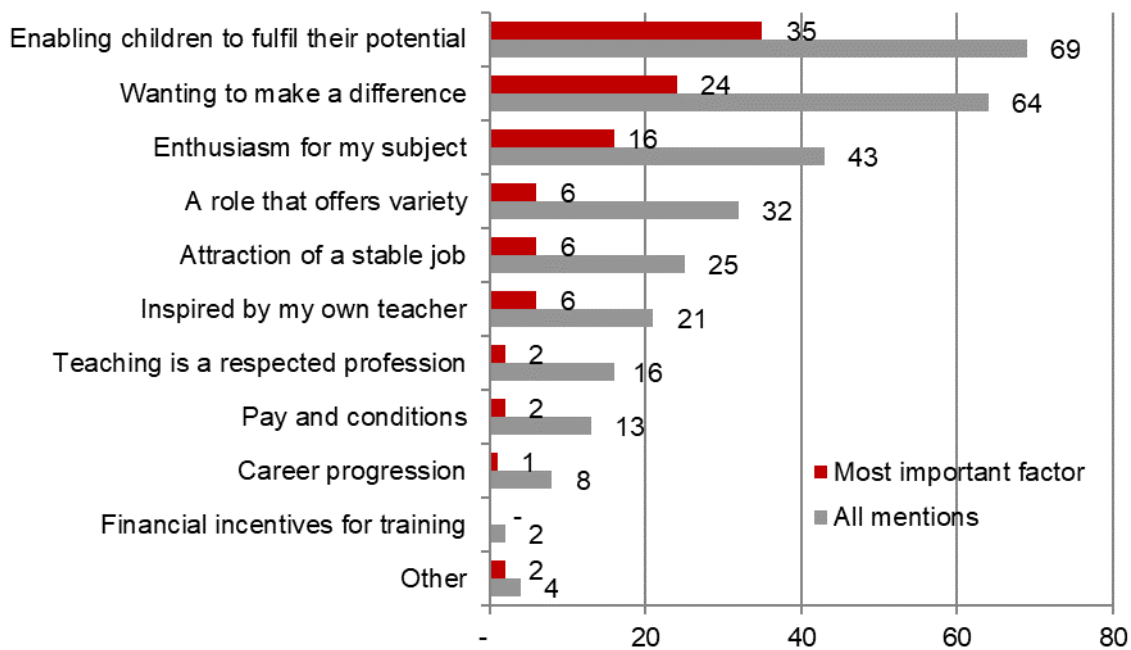
- 5.44 Stakeholders and ITE staff tended to believe that a teacher's starting salary was reasonably competitive when thinking about wages generally in Wales. However, there was some acknowledgement that there was still the attraction of other professions with salary levels that teaching had to compete with, combined with other factors that might be a draw. The point was also made among stakeholders that other professions would seem more appealing to some individuals than teaching because of the potential to pay off more quickly debt acquired during university. Other sectors, some felt, might also be associated with better prospects generally, particularly for STEM subjects.
- 5.45 Some teachers and ITE students tended to believe that pay had deteriorated over time and did not truly reflect the workload and responsibilities thought to be required of teachers. There were also references among teachers to having to use their own money to pay for classroom resources.

Online survey results on reasons for choosing to pursue a career in teaching

- 5.46 A synergy emerged between the qualitative findings, literature review and online survey that highlighted the importance of a sense of mission and making a difference in motivations to want to teach.
- 5.47 In the online survey, respondents were presented with a list of possible reasons for choosing to go into teaching as a career and were asked which were their first, second and third most important factors. 'Enabling children and young people to fulfil their potential', 'wanting to make a difference' and 'enthusiasm for my subject' were chosen as the first most important factor by 35 per cent, 24 per cent and 16 per cent of all respondents respectively. When taking all mentions of these factors into account (that is, counting those saying they were first, second or third most

important factors), ‘enabling children to fulfil their potential’ and ‘wanting to make a difference’ were the key motivators, mentioned by over six in ten respondents in the survey and reflecting the qualitative findings. As with the qualitative aspects ‘pay and conditions’ came much lower down the list of motivators to enter the profession.

Figure 1: Reasons for choosing to go into teaching - prompted (Percentage giving each response)



Base: All (1,945)

5.48 Those who had qualified to teach in primary schools were more likely to cite ‘enabling children and young people to fulfil their potential’ and ‘wanting to make a difference’ as motivators to become a teacher than those qualified to teach in secondary schools. Primary school teachers were also more likely to mention wanting ‘a role that offers variety’ than secondary school teachers. Conversely, enthusiasm for their subject was much more likely to be mentioned by secondary school teachers than primary school teachers.

5.49 Younger respondents in the survey (aged 34 and under) were much more likely to mention the impact of an inspirational teacher in encouraging them to go into teaching than older respondents: ‘inspired by my own teacher’ was mentioned by 28

per cent of those aged 34 and under as one of their top three reasons, compared with 20 per cent of 35-54 year olds and 15 per cent of those aged 55 and over.

- 5.50 While pay and conditions came relatively low down the list of motivating factors for becoming a teacher overall, it was relatively more important to those teaching through the medium of Welsh. Regionally, the percentage of teachers choosing this factor was highest in GwE which includes more rural areas. Nineteen per cent of those mainly teaching in Welsh and 20 per cent of those teaching in both Welsh and English chose 'pay and conditions' as one of their top three factors for going into teaching compared with 11 per cent of those teaching mainly in English.

Perceptions of teaching as a career among 'A' Level pupils and undergraduates

- 5.51 The research with school pupils and undergraduates who were not studying to teach covered what they wanted from a career as well as their perceptions of teaching as a career. The focus groups included some participants who were interested in teaching or had applied to do so; and some who had not given it much thought as an option. There was synergy between the views of school pupils and undergraduates overall as well as overlap between what they might want from a career and some perceptions held about a teaching career.

What young people wanted from a career

- 5.52 A range of different factors were mentioned among young people when they discussed what they would want from a career. Two more prevalent themes emerged: the first broad theme related to **job satisfaction**. There were references to wanting a career that was enjoyable and, in particular, offered variety to maintain interest. For some, satisfaction also meant being able to pursue a subject of interest and afforded the opportunity to use the degree attained.

“That I’m not going to be bored, that it’s not going to be the same thing every single day.” (Undergraduate)

5.53 The theme of job satisfaction also incorporated for some young people a career that was valued, respected and meaningful in the sense that there was ‘a goal to work towards’ and the potential to have a positive impact in some way.

“Gwaith sy’n newid bywydau. . . . Boddhad personol”. (“Work that changes lives. . . . Personal satisfaction.”) (Secondary school pupil)

5.54 Job satisfaction was highlighted by some pupils and undergraduates as being more important and more motivating than pay, provided that the latter was adequate (discussed in more detail below).

“Well personally to me it has to be close to an interest I have like in terms of actually doing a job, so like pay probably comes second because if I don’t have interest it doesn’t matter how much someone will pay me I won’t do that job. If I have an interest I would like to be paid like proportionately to the job.” (Secondary school pupil)

5.55 A second theme identified among young people was an **adequate salary**. Some referred to good pay almost immediately as an important aspect of what they would want from a career although it tended to be the case that it was secondary to the elements they highlighted within job satisfaction. References were sometimes made to the need to pay off debt acquired in higher education or to pay bills. Opinions varied on what an ‘adequate’ salary might be which ranged from a ‘minimum’ of £20,000 up to £30,000. The idea of starting on a modest salary but with the prospect of swift increases was deemed to be attractive on occasion.

“[I want a job that is] something industry based, because there is a lot of money in industry as opposed to government.” (Undergraduate)

5.56 A less prevalent theme among some young people on what they would want from a career centred on a desire for a **good work-life balance** so that work did not take over their lives, for example causing stress and impacting on quality of life. Occasionally, however, the comment was made that work-life balance might become more important later in life, with an emphasis initially on being prepared to work hard at the start of a career.

“Dim gormod o bwysau fel bod e yn arwain at unrhyw salwch meddwl neu rhywbeth fel yna achos mae gymaint o straen yn gallu bod o fewn gyrfa.” (“Not

too much pressure so that it would lead to some sort of mental illness or anything because there can be so much stress in your career.”) (Secondary school pupil)

- 5.57 Less prevalent than the themes above, the potential for **career progression** was sometimes raised as an additional factor that young people would want from a career. Personal development with the ability to acquire new skills was also important on occasion. Progression, in a few cases, was associated with increased pay as well as a sense of achievement. It was sometimes suggested that this theme would not necessarily be at ‘the front of your mind’ when looking for a first job but that it would become more important in time.
- 5.58 A number of individual comments were made that related to working conditions as aspects a young person would seek from a career. They covered ‘benefits’, job security and the potential to have some autonomy in the role.
- 5.59 A final point highlighted from time to time was the desire to embark on a career where there was a good team spirit among colleagues who could be relied upon to support each other.

Perceptions of teaching as a profession – positive views

- 5.60 Views were mixed among ‘A’ Level pupils and undergraduates over how they perceived teaching as a profession and possible career option. The main positive association with the teaching centred on **job satisfaction**. This factor incorporated the potential to have a positive impact on others and seeing children develop. Some participants expected that seeing the difference a teacher could make and playing a part in children’s development would be very rewarding. The point was also made that if an individual viewed teaching as having an ‘important social role’, there is satisfaction to be had from ‘doing something that’s very important for the whole of society’.

“Well, firstly, it’s emotionally rewarding. You get to inspire young people and hopefully get them to progress onto something that will also inspire other people and also benefit other people. So you’re a kind of a stone in the pond that’s going to send out a ripple.” (Undergraduate)

5.61 Similarly, areas of job satisfaction such as making a difference and the rewarding outcomes that accompany it were important to some young people who wanted to pursue a career in teaching. Teaching as a vocation was also a motivating factor among those who were considering it. Summing up this latter point, one undergraduate participant could not imagine ‘doing anything else’ other than teaching, having wanted to do so since she was young: ‘it doesn’t go away if you’ve got that in you’.

“Mae’r awydd i helpu pobl, dyna be dwi moen neud, i wneud gwahaniaeth”
 (“The desire to help people, that’s what I want to do, is to make a difference.”)
 (Secondary school pupil)

5.62 A second positive association some young participants made with the teaching profession was the length of **holidays** that teachers received. There was sometimes a belief, however, that a proportion of holidays would still be spent working, for example preparing for the next term. It was suggested on occasion that holidays would be even more appealing to individuals who had their own children to look after.

“They [holidays] are great. If you have kids it’s perfect. You get the same holidays as the kids pretty much. You get summers, Christmas, everything. It is very appealing.” (Undergraduate)

5.63 According to some young people, teaching offered the prospect of a **stable career** with job security given how, in their minds, there would always be a need for teachers. An opinion was also given that the offer of incentives to train meant that there must be a shortage of teachers, further reinforcing the view for some that it was a stable career where ‘you’re going to walk into a job’ for those subjects that are in demand.

“Even if you move around, every town needs a teacher. . . . Especially if you teach a STEM subject. They are desperate for teachers. You’re wanted everywhere.” (Undergraduate)

5.64 Considering positive associations with teaching and the **Welsh language**, some ‘A’ Level pupils in Welsh-medium schools who were interested in the profession (and confident in their Welsh skills) were attracted to the prospect of training to be

teachers through the medium of Welsh. They often felt more comfortable communicating in Welsh, especially if it was their first language or if they felt they knew more subject specific terminology in Welsh. Similarly, there was an opinion expressed among undergraduates and pupils that an individual would have more opportunities than a non-Welsh speaker from which to choose within the teaching profession.

“Dwi'n hoffi siarad Cymraeg ond hefyd dwi wedi dysgu'r termau i gyd yn Gymraeg felly mi fydd o probably yn haws i mi ddysgu fo yn Gymraeg.” (“I like to speak Welsh but also I've learned all the terms in Welsh so it will probably be easier for me to teach it in Welsh.”) (Secondary school pupil)

5.65 Some of the non-fluent Welsh speaking young people tended to be open to the concept of having to use some basic Welsh in the classroom and were not discouraged on the whole. However, they did point out that they would need reassurance and support to do this. The point was also made among undergraduates and pupils that the Welsh language's perceived relevance to a teaching career depended on the geographical area they would want to teach in and whether it was in secondary or primary school. It was seen as being more important for primary school teachers to have Welsh language skills rather than secondary school teachers.

5.66 Further, **less prevalent positive associations** with teaching generally which were occasionally mentioned among young people included:

- In terms of pay and conditions, a 'sustainable salary' that might be more than that of an apprentice or trainee, recognition that it represented a good salary in more rural areas, the prospect of earning more in more senior positions and the provision of a pension;
- The ability to continue to follow and develop a passion for a subject and being provided with the opportunity to share it with others;
- The likely support from other teachers and the 'sociable' nature among colleagues;
- The potential for career progression, for example the perceived ability to reach a position as Head of Department within a short number of years.

5.67 Spontaneous awareness of financial **incentives** to train to teach among this small group of undergraduates was quite common, less so among school pupils unless they wanted to teach. The incentives in England seemed to be more visible than the Welsh equivalents. For those considering teaching, there was awareness that the levels of incentives in England differed to those in Wales and that, in Wales, incentive levels varied by subject studied and degree grade. In the cases where participants had explored the options, England was thought to offer more attractive incentives than Wales. Opinions were mixed on whether or not it would attract them to teach in England or to stay in Wales. Overall, however, financial incentives alone were not highlighted as a key motivating factor to want to teach in the first instance, echoing the findings from the literature review.

“Whereas I would have preferred to stay in Wales, but I can’t justify it. . . .

There’s no way I’m staying here for fourteen grand less. . . . I like Cardiff, I like the city, I like the people and I’d love to teach here, but I just can’t justify it when it comes to the money.” (Undergraduate)

5.68 Some undergraduates and school pupils had seen advertising that referred to financial incentives available to people who wanted to train to teach. However, the advertising tended to be associated with teaching generally, rather than England specifically. When prompted, some responded that incentives might add to the appeal of teaching, instil greater confidence in the career choice and that incentives could also help those who wanted to teach but might struggle financially. According to participants in one group, the incentive might help to allay any concerns about the starting salary.

5.69 From time to time, it was asserted that an individual would still need ultimately to want to teach but that an incentive could tip the balance where an individual had yet to make a final decision.

5.70 A less positive view was expressed in one discussion with pupils was that the offer of an incentive seemed a short-term solution; and there was still an expectation that a teacher’s salary would be quite low versus opportunities in other sectors. Examples of sectors of interest in this group (other than teaching) included law, forensics, medicine, paediatric nursing and sectors connected to psychology and science.

5.71 When talking spontaneously about teaching, young people tended not to initially specify that they had in mind **primary or secondary school**, unless they were considering teaching as a possible career option. When reflecting on the attraction of teaching in primary school, there were references to:

- Having always wanted to work with young children and the nurturing aspect of teaching young children - the ability to influence their lives at an early point: 'ti'n setio nhw fyny' ('you set them up');
- Having 'loved' their own time at primary school versus less happy times at secondary school;
- How teacher training for primary school might be easier;
- Pupils who would be easier to manage than secondary school pupils and 'nicer';
- The opportunity to instil in children a passion for science at an early age, according to one Physics graduate.

5.72 Where young people considered secondary school teaching, possible attractions included how:

- It allowed an individual to follow their passion for a subject and develop their knowledge further; and sometimes to share that knowledge with pupils;
- It would be more intellectually stimulating, with the potential to be challenged in a positive way by pupils on the subject taught;
- Secondary school teaching was considered more likely to equip an individual with transferable skills to other roles beyond the profession;
- There might be better progression prospects in secondary school, for example working towards the position of Head of Department.

Perceptions of teaching as a profession – less positive views

5.73 Young people identified what they perceived to be the negative aspects of teaching as a career including those which would deter them from the profession. The most prevalent themes were that teachers had a heavy **workload** and that the job could be quite **stressful**.

“The hours are ridiculously long. . . . Even teachers who’ve been teaching for years complain about what time they stay up until marking.” (Undergraduate)

- 5.74 A number of factors were thought to contribute to these themes: additional responsibilities teachers were expected to take on; coping with syllabus changes; having to deal with difficult parents; larger class sizes; managing pupils’ behaviour and their lack of respect for teachers; the amount of marking; the hours teachers were thought to work beyond the school day without additional financial reward; the non-pedagogical aspects such as pastoral care and safeguarding; the possibility of job cuts; and the pressure of pupils needing to achieve good results in their exams.
- 5.75 As a consequence, some young people felt that teachers might experience a lack of work-life balance given the workload and pressures described above.

“Fi’n nabod lot o athrawon yn teulu fi ac maen nhw fel yn dweud bod gwaith fel yn constant. Achos mae e fel arfer ar benwythnosau mae'n rhaid i ti planio gwaith yr wythnos mas, mae e fel dod gartre ac mae'r gwaith yn dod gartre gyda chi, so ti'm yn gallu cau e yn yr ysgol.” (“I know a lot of teachers in my family and they’re saying that work is like a constant. Because usually at weekends you have to plan the work for the rest of the week, it's like coming home and work is coming home with you, so you aren’t able leave it at school.”) (Secondary school pupil)

- 5.76 A further reasonably common negative association with teaching voiced among young participants was that teaching is **not a particularly respected or appreciated** profession. As an example, reference was made to ‘having to be careful what you say and do’ and to a fear of a pupil lying about a teacher’s conduct. (This issue is discussed further on page 47.) Other sectors also seemed more attractive to some.
- 5.77 **Teachers’ pay** was sometimes added to the negative associations with the profession raised by young people. This view tended to be linked to the expectation that it would not reflect the amount of work a teacher would be expected to do and the perceived pressures involved (‘a thankless job’ as one undergraduate summed up). There was also a view that the pay would not be as attractive as the possibilities within other sectors, a belief reiterated among stakeholders and

teachers. According to one young person, the starting salary for a teacher equated to that of a 'health care assistant'. In a few instances, participants gave estimates of what they thought a teacher's starting salary would be. Those who had researched teaching as a career were more precise but overall, estimates tended to be around £18,000-£23,000.

"We see it in our teaching and from what our teachers tell us that they are basically being asked to do more for less, so the pay rises are pretty much not really there anymore." (Secondary school pupil)

- 5.78 From time to time, reservations emerged regarding teaching and the **Welsh language**. Reflecting the views of some ITE staff, there were cases where Welsh-medium pupils commented that they would be worried about passing on 'awful habits' in Welsh. Some felt their Welsh would be rusty after completing an undergraduate degree in English. It was also occasionally anticipated that it would be a challenge to teach in Welsh because of experiences as a pupil with very limited resources available in the Welsh language.

'Sw'n i'n teimlo bod Cymraeg fi ddim digon da i ddysgu'r plant. Achos 'san nhw'n copïo fi. A fyswn i yn dysgu habits awful i nhw.'" ("I would feel that my Welsh was not good enough to teach the children. Because they would copy me. And I would teach them awful habits.") (Secondary school pupil)

- 5.79 An additional concern with the Welsh language mentioned on occasion among young people with limited Welsh language skills was that teaching might require an individual to have a certain level of Welsh which was one more thing to learn, detracting from other teaching tasks. It was also stated that with 'the changing measures from the Welsh Government you never know what they might require next' in relation to the Welsh language. Young people interested in teaching, and who stated that they could speak a little of the language, were occasionally worried that their Welsh would not be good enough for them to go into teaching.

- 5.80 Furthermore, there was the potential for confusion over the level of Welsh that would be required to teach in Wales: one undergraduate believed anyone wanting to teach would have to learn Welsh in their own time with no support from the ITE Centre. Echoing their concern, it was thought among ITE staff and a stakeholder

that a misconception existed over Welsh language requirements and teaching which would need to be addressed with more effective communications.

5.81 On occasion, participants provided examples of what would deter them from becoming specifically **primary or secondary school** teachers. In relation to primary school teaching, there were references to:

- Having heard that primary school teachers are having to deal with more and more 'paperwork';
- Having to be more involved in 'health and safety', safeguarding and with childcare related tasks which should be the responsibility of parents – 'an extension of the day nursery almost';
- Not being able to continue with a passion for a subject;
- Not being challenged enough intellectually;
- Teacher training that might be harder than secondary as primary school teachers 'have to cover more ground';
- The amount of 'energy you have to project' throughout the day to keep young children interested in learning.

5.82 Factors that deterred some from the idea of teaching at secondary school included:

- Having to manage teenagers - seeing 'all the rubbish' teachers at secondary school have to deal with in terms of poor behaviour; and a concern that the pupils 'would eat you alive';
- The anticipated stress associated with exam targets and results.

Awareness and understanding of routes into teaching and expectations of training

5.83 Young people who were interested in teaching as a career tended to be aware that a common route into teaching was via a PGCE. It was assumed, but not necessarily with any certainty, that the relevant 'A' Level and degree would be needed to teach a specific subject at secondary school. Those who were seriously considering teaching were aware that there were specific GCSE requirements and that these

could differ by UK nation. Otherwise, participants guessed what the entry requirements might be.

5.84 Opinions varied on these requirements, mostly around GCSE attainment. Some felt that a certain level of qualifications was expected and that parents would be reassured to know that teachers had to have attained grade Bs for their Maths and English GCSEs. Some countered, however, that it did not seem very fair and argued that an individual could develop significantly between their GCSEs and higher education. It seemed short-sighted to deter from teaching those who might be on course to achieve a 'high 2:1' grade at university, for example.

5.85 Similarly, there were mixed views on what teacher training might be like. Those young people who knew of others with experience of training tended to expect the workload to be challenging, based on what they had heard and on imagining what it might be like as a student teacher. References were made to learning to manage children's behaviour, having to project authority and perform in front of qualified teachers and having to move between theoretical and practical components of the course.

5.86 In other cases, some young people thought that perhaps teacher training would not be too onerous: there was believed to be a shortage of teachers, for example, or they had seen students just sitting in and observing a class. There was also an occasional perception that primary teacher training might be easier than secondary because less depth of subject knowledge was required.

"P1: I don't think it would be too bad. . . . I can't see it being ridiculously hard. . . . P2: Haven't you got a ten-thousand-word essay on your experience of teacher training? . . . P1: It will take work like every job will. . . . I feel like your degree will probably be harder than your PGCE." (Secondary school pupils)

5.87 Unless they had explored teaching as an option, participants tended to be uncertain over how long teacher training normally lasted. One group of 'A' Level pupils, for example, guessed that it must take around three to four years to train. They were surprised to hear that a PGCE lasted for an academic year, thinking it should take longer.

Young people's sources of information on teaching as a career

5.88 Some young people recalled seeing **TV ads** on becoming a teacher although recollections tended to be vague⁵. Corresponding social media content had also been noted on occasion. (Participants were likely to be referring to the Department for Education's 'Get into Teaching' campaign.) There were references made among participants to a message of receiving money to become a teacher but there was uncertainty over the figures advertised and over the criteria required to receive the amount highlighted. In addition, it was not immediately clear to all that it applied to England rather than Wales.

“Even when I'm on stuff like Twitter, the main ads that come up are 'train to teach'. You'll get 30,000 [pounds] for being a Geography teacher, or whatever; it's 25,000. . . . I see a lot of adverts on my social media trying to encourage me.” (Undergraduate)

5.89 One undergraduate who had decided to go into teaching was very positive about his experience with a 'Get into Teaching' roadshow event in Cardiff. After providing his email address he was assigned an adviser who provided comprehensive one-to-one support on moving forward with his decision to train to teach: phone conversations, talking through motivations to teach and how the system works, checking his personal statement – they 'held my hand all the way through'.

5.90 **Online search** was deemed to be a likely starting point to search for information about becoming a teacher. There were instances where young people had looked online although, on the whole, they could not remember precisely which sites they had visited. Examples included a 'government' site, a Local Authority site and 'Prospects' which provides information and advice on graduate careers⁶.

5.91 **Family and friends** sometimes contributed to young people's understanding of teaching as a career and what it might involve from a positive (rewarding, explaining the PGCE route into teaching) and less positive (workload) standpoint.

⁵ Recent advertising campaigns include the Department of Education's *Get Into Teaching - Your Future: Their Future* recruitment campaign which tell the story of teaching from a teacher's perspective and include references to financial incentives in England.

⁶ [Prospects](#)

- 5.92 In some cases, young people had talked with their **teachers** about the profession, for example with teachers describing the rewarding elements of the job as well as the more challenging aspects. Within the school, a careers adviser or Career Wales adviser had on occasion provided young people with information on teaching as a career.
- 5.93 Undergraduates in one group were aware of presentations from Teach First at the university, with the promise of 'free pizza' for those attending. In contrast, undergraduates at another university did not think the university promoted teaching as a career very effectively. A participant recalled the profession being allotted 'half a slide or something' in a presentation from the 'careers department'.
- 5.94 During the discussions, participants were briefly prompted with a screenshot of the Discover Teaching website⁷. There was low awareness of the site and brand in this qualitative sample.
- 5.95 On balance, young people tended to think that social media was an effective route for reaching them with messages about teaching as a career, along with online search. They referred to Instagram, Snapchat, Spotify, Twitter and YouTube as likely routes. Views were more mixed on the effectiveness of using Facebook.

How teaching is viewed as a profession generally

- 5.96 Across the different groups of participants, an opinion emerged that the teaching profession was **not as well respected or valued as it could be**. There were also sometimes thought to be less positive perceptions among the general public regarding the work involved for teachers, including workload pressures, stress and funding cuts.
- 5.97 A number of sources for these perceptions were identified, based on participants' feedback. At a broad level, the **media and social media** were sometimes associated with a preoccupation for negative and 'scare-mongering' content. Such content was deemed by some to be unhelpful, unfair and in certain cases inaccurate, for example putting a spotlight on pupil behaviour and portraying teaching as a 'dangerous' profession suffering from 'lawlessness'. According to one

⁷ [Discovery teaching](#) was launched in March 2017.

stakeholder, this was despite the perception of Her Majesty's Inspectors that behaviour is better now in schools than it has ever been.

“Maybe witch hunt isn't the best term but there is always, you see it on Facebook all the time, and on all sorts of newspapers and social media, they're always out to get a teacher or a Headteacher or something. There's always something that they've done wrong.” (Secondary school pupil)

5.98 Some stakeholders highlighted how media coverage of issues in the education sector in England sometimes leaked into, and was therefore associated with, Wales. The media narrative for Wales was not deemed to be clear enough in depicting the differences between England and Wales and emphasising that some of the pressures and issues in England might not apply to the same extent in Wales.

5.99 Closer to home, **family and friends** appeared to be playing a part in attempting to influence individuals' perceptions of teaching as career. Some young people, ITE students and teachers reported how those close to them could be surprised at their plan to teach and question their decision or try to advise them not to pursue it.

“I'm going to graduate with a First most likely, and I hear so often people [say], 'but you can do so much better than teaching. Why are you going into teaching?'” (Undergraduate)

5.100 Similarly, there were occasions where, according to young people and ITE students, they had been advised by **teachers** and in one case a university tutor not to choose the profession as a career. Teachers from time to time admitted that they had warned others not to become teachers because of the workload at primary and secondary school level.

5.101 From time to time, **teaching unions** were thought by some stakeholders to contribute to the perceived general negativity surrounding the profession, for example in relation to pupils' behaviour. It was recognised that it was teaching unions' role to support their members but some felt that there was undue emphasis placed on negative stories on teaching.

5.102 A final source occasionally thought to be affecting how teaching is perceived generally was **Welsh Government**. It was suggested that it had contributed to casting the profession in a negative light over the years with apparently regular

criticism of teachers and the sector. According to one ITE member of staff, ‘the profession has been bashed’.

- 5.103 The **marketing** of teaching in Wales was highlighted on occasion among stakeholders who did not think it had been promoted very well. Current efforts were seen as ‘clearly not working, because numbers are going in the other direction and it doesn’t seem to be targeted’. There was not thought to be enough investment in this area and it was not felt to be sufficiently tailored towards the areas where there were recruitment issues (e.g. for certain subjects and Headteachers).
- 5.104 Among stakeholders and ITE staff, it was felt that budget cuts in some schools (which also attracted media coverage) and funding issues meant that those joining the sector could be disappointed by the reality⁸. This could involve being encouraged to choose teaching as a career only to find that at the point of entry there are very few relevant vacancies. In addition, such negative stories being highlighted in the press were thought to challenge the notion that teaching was a secure profession to join. It was therefore expected to be difficult to create credible messages about teaching in these circumstances given this kind of media coverage.
- 5.105 Also related to the profession’s general image, some stakeholders and teachers referred to the attraction of other sectors with salary levels that teaching had to compete with, combined with perceptions of better prospects and more prestige (for example where STEM qualifications were required).

ITE Centres: attracting students and challenges faced

Efforts to attract students

- 5.106 ITE staff gave examples of their Centre’s efforts to attract applications for their courses, which are described below. Recognising the national issue with recruiting to certain courses, one Centre commented that they were involved in more activity than ever with attracting people to train to teach. Attraction was also recognised as a key area of focus for ITE Centres within the context of ITE reform in Wales. Work was reportedly underway on exploring how to become more ‘savvy’ with targeting

⁸ [An example of a media story in Wales on funding issues was at Whitchurch High School in Cardiff that coincided with the fieldwork period.](#)

potential applicants, including how best to attract individuals who might want a change in career.

- 5.107 Stakeholders on occasion suggested that ITE Centres might not be making enough use of data, or being as targeted as they could be. There was also a doubt expressed over whether or not ITE Centres effectively evaluated the messages used when attracting applicants. It was proposed by a stakeholder that ITE Centres in Wales could learn from some England ITE Centres on effective attraction techniques and that perhaps the effectiveness of efforts to attract and recruit could form part of the accreditation for ITE Centres in Wales.
- 5.108 The following section of the report groups ITE staff's feedback according to centre based activities, partnership working and digital activities.
- 5.109 On **activities based at the ITE Centres**, there were references to organising open days and evenings where potential applicants could attend presentations. Visits to the Centre could also include one-to-one discussions with potential applicants. ITE staff who used this latter method felt that a face to face approach was very effective.
- 5.110 In addition, undergraduates were targeted within the university or universities involved with running the ITE Centre. One example given was of developing taster modules within degree courses which gave students the chance to explore teaching further, should they be interested in the profession. Developing links with staff from different courses within the university was deemed important as well.

“Obviously for the postgrad courses, we can try to get the body of students that we have at the university who have clearly chosen us and think that we're good, we can try to attract them into teacher education, and we are in the process of validating modules to help them, to give them to give them taster modules.” (ITE staff)

- 5.111 **Working in partnership** with other organisations was highlighted among ITE staff as critical to the future success of attracting potential applicants to pursue a career in teaching. The reported focus was on schools and universities but there was also occasional reference to local authorities, Regional Education Consortia and unions, with a belief that it should be 'a team effort'. Some participants described how they were working on developing stronger relationships with schools in an attempt to

reach potential trainees earlier in their decision-making journey. In addition, there were references to visiting schools, attending 'recruitment fairs' aimed at secondary school pupils and taking part in 'sixth form conferences'. Taster days were organised in local schools for individuals who had attended an open day or evening at the ITE Centre and expressed an interest in teaching.

"We go to events to make sure we have a presence and increasingly going in to school events so that young people begin to think about teaching as a career much earlier on." (ITE staff)

- 5.112 In one example of working in partnership with schools, an ITE Centre had been sending student teachers into more deprived schools to provide one-to-one tutoring as well as an initial introduction to teaching as a career option. The aim was partly to 'inspire' pupils and 'sell success stories' via the students delivering the tutoring. In another example, the ITE Centre had been organising exam revision days in university for school pupils, supported by student teachers, not only to provide a service but to enable pupils to interact with the trainees and experience the ITE Centre environment.
- 5.113 A further example given was of hearing from new students that they had chosen the ITE provider because of the relationship between the Centre and a school. They might have been a pupil at the school or visited to obtain some observation experience before applying to train to teach. Teachers had recommended the Centre to pupils because of the relationship in place. Some of those teachers had also studied at the same Centre and were consequently acting as advocates as a result of 'deep partnerships'.
- 5.114 Developing relationships with potential applicants at an individual level was considered to be important and effective. An ITE student commented how they had not intended to choose to study at their Centre but meeting the staff had convinced them they would flourish there. Following up with individuals who attended open days included: offering a potential applicant the opportunity to spend some time observing in a school where they might also meet an ITE student; and sending out personalised letters to maintain the relationship and encourage them to choose the Centre.

- 5.115 Partnerships sometimes extended to include developing relationships with other university Schools. As an example, staff at one ITE Centre explained that they would visit Schools of Welsh in universities where they would create connections with staff and students. Potential applicants then ‘come to us on an open day and then you meet them at interview, and you’ve got links with the tutors in the college. So, it becomes a good personal link’.
- 5.116 Using current and former students as ambassadors when on visits to other institutions was thought by some to contribute to successful recruitment as well.
- 5.117 **Digital efforts** mentioned by ITE staff to attract applicants included ITE Centre webpages on the university website, using social media (for example to target Year 8 and 9 pupils, using Facebook Live and creating YouTube videos of graduating students) and creating a TV ad.
- 5.118 When interacting with potential applicants or pupils and in an effort to attract the best students, some ITE staff commented on the areas they emphasised such as: the positive difference teaching can make and how rewarding and ‘worthwhile’ teaching is; the goal of becoming an inspiring teacher to reflect what was thought to have prompted many individuals to think about teaching in the first place; how an individual attains a valuable qualification at the end of training that sets them up for a career; and covering routes into teaching. The support available with the Welsh language when training was also stressed, for those who might lack confidence or might have studied a degree in English.
- 5.119 A resilient quality was something ITE Centres looked for, according to some staff, to identify high calibre students. There was reference to having become more stringent with the recruitment process as well. Those for whom teaching was a vocation or for whom teaching represented a change to a more fulfilling career were considered by some to be potential high calibre students. A candidate completing relevant work experience was another example of an individual showing a strong desire to pursue the career and take on its challenges. An individual conveying any uncertainty about the career would be less likely to gain entry to a programme, according to some.

“High calibre individuals are those that have always had a vocation for teaching, so they’ve kept it as their eyes on the prize and those career

changers who want to pay back, who have gone into professions like law, solicitors . . . and want to do something that's more fulfilling.” (ITE staff)

ITE Centres: challenges faced with attraction and recruitment

- 5.120 Despite these efforts described above, some ITE staff reported how it could still be difficult to identify the best students until they had taken on their first placement. This stage in the training process was noted by some as a time when students could leave the course because they could not handle the teaching itself.
- 5.121 A number of further factors were believed to make it difficult for ITE Centres to attract the right candidates. ITE staff tended to concur with the view that **public perceptions of teaching** as a profession were not as positive as they could be, with perceptions of heavy workloads and pressures around school budgets.
- 5.122 Even some of the traditionally more popular courses, according to some ITE staff, were proving harder to fill. The example was given of an arts course that always recruited to target but in the last two years had dropped to below half. The cause of this drop was not known but there was conjecture it was probably part of a UK wide picture related to general perceptions of teaching, with issues that were believed to run deeper than approaches to attraction.
- 5.123 As mentioned by other participants, the **draw of other sectors** was thought to add to the challenge of attracting applicants, particularly for STEM subjects. Other sectors could be associated with more prestige, better pay and better prospects.
- 5.124 Focusing specifically on the **Welsh language**, some ITE staff believed that there were increasing numbers of opportunities for graduates with Welsh language skills as Welsh Government strengthened its commitment to the language. However, the pool from which to recruit was thought to remain limited.
- 5.125 Echoing the view that emerged on occasion among young Welsh speakers, some ITE staff felt Welsh speakers' **lack of confidence in their Welsh** was a key challenge to recruiting sufficient numbers of students to Welsh-medium courses. They noted how they sometimes encountered such candidates who had attended Welsh-medium school, but had gone to university in England or had completed their degree in English. Illustrating this point, an ITE staff member explained how they

had overheard a couple of students speaking in Welsh who had not revealed they spoke Welsh. The participant convinced the students (described as 'secret Welsh speakers') to move to bilingual schools for their placements as they had 'an asset they should be developing'.

"I think it's the main thing for all of them if they choose not to study through the medium of Welsh, it's confidence: they don't think they're good enough. Whether they have been through Welsh education or studied Welsh as a second language and would love to do it, they're afraid to put their head above the parapet because they are convinced they aren't good enough." (ITE staff)

5.126 A further area some ITE staff highlighted as affecting attraction and recruitment was the **entry requirement in Wales** for applicants to have at least a B at GCSE in English and Maths. The rationale for this move was understood but some did not think that it necessarily equated with identifying teaching talent. Some thought that this measure had begun to impact on application numbers and that it could be frustrating on occasion to lose individuals who could potentially be great teachers, including some who wanted a career change and decided to train in England as a result of their GCSE grades for English and Maths. One member of staff expressed her frustration with this requirement, aware of a talented Welsh speaker who had reluctantly gone to train in England because she had only attained a C in GCSE Maths. It was not clear from the research, however, the extent of these reported situations.

"I thought we were doing quite well on our selection processes of allowing students to demonstrate their skills in interview. We're now stopping them even coming for interview." (ITE staff)

5.127 An additional observation made by one member of staff was that it was not thought to be very clear during the UCAS application process that an equivalency test was available for those who had not attained the required GCSE grades but who wanted to teach. Students who had not made contact with ITE Centres could therefore be 'shut out' of the process without realising there were alternative paths they could take.

5.128 ITE staff were uncertain what the impact **financial incentives** to train might be having on attraction to the profession in Wales. Some described how incentives could be important for those who might want to switch careers but had financial commitments to meet. It was suggested on occasion, however, that the differential between incentives on offer in England and Wales meant that some potential students might choose to study in England rather than Wales. The point was also made among ITE staff that additional incentives to train that were available in England (e.g. for ex-service personnel and the Royal Society of Chemistry scholarship) were not believed to be available in Wales.

“If you’ve got a 2:1, you get nothing here, and you still get a substantial incentive in England. And there’s no point in me standing in the room after that [to convince candidates to train at the Centre], because they know where they’re going to go [to England].” (ITE staff)

5.129 Expanding on this point, one participant remarked that they did not think the Centre had seen an increase in applications for those subjects attracting the higher incentives. They expected the teacher training options in England near the border to be more likely to attract individuals who were keen to secure a financial incentive. The participant was also aware of an ITE Centre in England that included South East Wales among its target areas for recruitment and that ‘we’re probably not mindful of that enough’.

5.130 Additional attraction challenges for ITE Centres occasionally mentioned included:

- A concern raised by a stakeholder that senior staff within universities might not see ITE as a priority for the institution – there was ‘not a drive from the very top’: it was felt that, in Wales, the perceived small scale nature of ITE provision spread across different sites meant that universities in Wales might not be ‘that interested in it’, when compared with the scale in some universities in England which might be producing more teachers than in all of Wales. Being ‘viable’ in terms of scale was believed to be an important issue for universities and also for recruiting good quality staff;

- A query over whether or not the new curriculum for Wales might cause potential candidates to question the impact of training in Wales versus England in terms of how transferable their skills might be;
- Primary school NQTs finding it easier in England than Wales to secure a permanent position where supply teaching might be a more realistic option.

Schools: challenges recruiting to certain roles

5.131 Reflecting the views from ITE staff, teachers and stakeholders pointed to the increasing difficulties faced recruiting staff into **STEM subjects and Welsh language roles**. A school highlighted the difficulties they had encountered recruiting a senior Welsh language teacher, with no applicants when they advertised recently. One school had also ‘struggled massively’ recruiting teachers for business and IT, stating that ‘there just aren’t the people’. The combination of general perceptions of the profession, the allure of other sectors and insufficient pupils studying the required subjects were believed by some to be key barriers to attracting the required staff to teach. A stakeholder thought the number of young people taking STEM subjects, modern foreign languages or Welsh language at ‘A’ Level needed to be increased to help recruit more teachers.

“This year we ended up with [x] applicants [for Maths roles]. We interviewed almost everybody and appointed almost everybody, and I look back to maybe seven or eight years ago and look at the student teachers that we had here that we wouldn’t employ whereas now we would absolutely be snapping them up.” (Secondary school teacher)

5.132 Some stakeholders perceived issues with attracting applicants to take on **Headteacher** and other senior roles in schools. They believed the additional responsibilities associated with the role and a focus on accountability and results deterred teachers with the potential to lead to apply. Some teachers also referred to a reluctance to consider a Headship or Deputy Headship role because of the pressures and focus on management rather than teaching⁹. Reducing the pressures

⁹ The latest ‘[School Census Results 2018](#)’ statistical release was published on 25 July. The release contains information on the number of teachers and support staff in post as at 16 January 2018. It states that ‘the

associated with taking on senior leadership roles was considered key by some in encouraging more applications for these roles at secondary school level.

“There’s no doubt that it’s harder to recruit good people into education at the moment particularly in terms of school leadership. . . . [We need to] get to the stage where young English and Maths teachers aspire to be Heads of Department because they see it as a good thing to do, rather than at the moment, Heads of Maths and English trying to get out because it’s too pressured.” (Stakeholder)

- 5.133 A final concern occasionally voiced among teachers was that the apparent increasing focus on Welsh language would deter some people from entering the profession in the future.

Suggestions among participants for improving the attractiveness of teaching

- 5.134 A range of ideas were volunteered among participants. The main theme was improving **the general perception and status of teaching**, mentioned among teachers, stakeholders, ITE staff and students and undergraduates. There were calls for a communications campaign to support this improvement and to help promote teaching in Wales. For some, this would help rebuild respect for, and the value of, the profession.

“If we are to remedy recruitment and retention of education staff - teachers and leaders - there will need to be a change in national culture. The status of the profession needs to be raised so that it attracts the very best candidates - regarded as highly as law or medicine.” (Stakeholder)

- 5.135 Some participants provided suggestions for such a campaign:
- Demonstrating how teachers’ pay and conditions are competitive, with attractive holidays;

average number of applications for head teacher or deputy head teacher posts with no teaching commitment in secondary schools was 12.3 in 2017 compared to 5.6 in 2016.

- Doing more to build in a theme of 'brand Wales' into marketing and communications, emphasising new initiatives and reforms and Wales' quality of life;
- Emphasising excitement around the new curriculum in Wales, positioning it as something to be confident about and that it is part of a global movement. However, on occasion there were concerns that Wales might become less attractive as a result of a new curriculum with more change to deal with and concerns over how transferable teaching qualifications in Wales would be to other nations;
- Focusing on pupils' voices within the campaign and how teachers inspire them and make a positive difference;
- Highlighting what teachers do, the variety of the role, the impact they can have on pupils' lives and the 'buzz' this creates: 'trying to tell people that it's actually an interesting and exciting thing to do' while developing skills at the same time; the ability to continue to follow a passion for a subject could also be stressed with the Welsh language;
- Increasing efforts to ensure good news stories made it into the media given that 'there's nothing promoting how good education is' and 'nobody celebrates anything that we do', as one participant summed up. However, it was still sometimes deemed a challenge to 'match the rhetoric to the accounts of the other stories that are coming out at the same time' such as on budget issues and redundancies;
- Referring to career progression and continuing professional development options to ensure more ambitious candidates are attracted.

5.136 Some participants (mainly teachers, stakeholders, ITE staff and undergraduates) felt that **addressing workload issues** for teachers and concerns with the accountability process would help to improve perceptions of the profession with examples of what was being done to improve it. It was suggested that providing evidence of improved work-life balance for teachers as a result of reducing workload would help to make teaching more attractive.

“We’ve got to tackle workload for classroom staff. That means a change of mindset and a lot of that is to do with the accountability system. We’ve got to move away from the idea that a set of results that have occurred at one point in a young person’s life equate to success or failure for a school, for a teacher.” (Stakeholder)

5.137 A further theme from stakeholders’ and ITE staff’s suggestions for improving the attractiveness of teaching centred on **how to reach potential applicants** – and the need to be more targeted. Ideas included:

- Encouraging ITE Centres to be more forensic in their approach to attraction by making more use of data;
- Ensuring careers advisers in schools are as proactive as possible;
- Making more use of ‘ambassadors’ in ITE Centres visiting universities and schools to reassure Welsh speakers who lack confidence in their own skills;
- Targeting more effectively the subjects where Wales was experiencing a shortfall of students, for example focusing on their love of a subject to attract STEM / Welsh language students;
- Targeting those who have left teaching but might be convinced to return by continuing to engage with ITE alumni over time;
- Targeting and supporting more effectively those who wish to change careers by focusing on specific sectors;
- Targeting more effectively support staff in schools such as Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants and providing them with a practical route into qualified teaching.

5.138 Suggested improvements relating to **finance** were raised from time to time among all participant groups on how to improve the attractiveness of teaching:

- Exploring the effectiveness of the financial incentives available in Wales;
- Improving teachers’ pay;
- Increasing the financial incentives to match those available in England;

- Linking the funding policy for Welsh students to a requirement to study in Wales rather than the current situation where they are able to study anywhere in the UK;
- Local Authorities exploring the potential to sponsor trainees for hard-to-recruit subjects and to be more involved in helping 'selling teaching as a career'.

5.139 **Strengthening partnership working** across schools, ITE Centres and universities was highlighted by some ITE staff as an improvement to attract people to teach with more targeted, consistent and sustained work. It was suggested by a Local Authority that they should reflect on how they could become more involved. Within this theme, it was proposed that there could be more concerted efforts in schools to attract pupils to consider teaching. This could involve some form of 'talent-spotting' of pupils who display characteristics that would suit a career in teaching.

5.140 More could be done, it was suggested on occasion, to explore how all organisations with an interest – including Regional Consortia and Welsh Government – could work more cohesively.

5.141 On occasion, participants thought that improvements related to **entry criteria** to train to teach and routes into teaching would help with its attractiveness as a profession. Examples given included:

- Adopting a more 'common sense' approach with grade B requirements if a candidate has potential as a teacher; and publicising more widely the equivalency tests as an option to those who did not achieve the required GCSE grades;
- Developing better support for potential applicants who would require more flexibility to train, for example offering part-time options for training and more employment based routes to help with financial commitments.

5.142 Two final suggestions occasionally voiced were: to create more jobs for NQTs and to offer the guarantee of a job as an incentive; and for Welsh Government to help change the narrative and be seen to be more supportive and trusting of teachers. More positive teachers would mean more inspiring role models, according to one participant.

6. Teacher retention and what can cause teachers to leave the profession

- 6.1 This chapter explores participants' views on what motivates them to continue to teach and what factors can cause them to have doubts about continuing in the profession and ultimately to leave prematurely.
- 6.2 Within each of the broad areas identified, this section highlights how they relate to ITE students, those at NQT induction and more experienced teachers.
- 6.3 Results are also included from the online survey on reasons for continuing to teach and for leaving the profession. These findings broadly correspond with the qualitative research with qualified teachers.
- 6.4 The report section consists of findings from qualified teachers, ITE students, ITE staff and stakeholders.

Factors that supported a commitment to teach

Making a positive difference and seeing pupils develop

- 6.5 Looking across the views and experiences of ITE students, those at NQT induction, teachers and stakeholders, a key theme that continued to motivate individuals to want to teach was making a positive difference and seeing pupils develop their learning. This was also the main theme from the online survey. From the perspective of **ITE students**, the first occasion when they spent time in the classroom during teaching sometimes acted as a strong reinforcement to their decision to pursue this career. These early experiences were rewarding and also helped with a student's confidence in their teaching ability. Participants occasionally acknowledged that they did not necessarily have the vocational calling to teach initially. However, this motivating factor of making a difference had grown once they began to spend time with pupils and were able to see the results of their teaching efforts.

"I wasn't ever sure that I was going to do it as a job, I just wanted to do an interesting degree, something I was interested in. But then when I started the

actual teacher training and the time in school I realised that yeah I did want to actually pursue that as a career.” (Primary school teacher)

- 6.6 This motivating theme continued through the teaching journey at **NQT induction and with more experienced teachers**, as they saw pupils progress and develop over time. Examples of what making a difference meant included: achievements in the classroom, for example a pupil solving an equation, attaining a GCSE grade when any grade was doubtful, staying in mainstream education, getting into Cambridge University and improving their prospects on leaving school. These moments were variously described as ‘exceptionally rewarding’, ‘gold nuggets’, ‘emotional’ and unique: ‘I’ve never had that job where you get that chill up your spine when someone gets something that you’ve done. It’s really rewarding, it’s exceptionally rewarding’, as one teacher concluded.

“I teach because I want them to do well in life. . . . I teach because I want the children to be the best they can be.” (Secondary school teacher)

- 6.7 In addition, making a difference sometimes applied to more pastoral elements among more experienced teachers, such as ensuring a child had something to eat at breakfast or working with parents to ensure a child attends school.

Professional support

- 6.8 A second common theme that helped to strengthen commitments to teach concerned support, reflecting findings from the literature review. This theme applied across the teaching journey. The importance and impact of **supportive mentors** and school staff was stressed among ITE students. Some expressed great appreciation for the staff at the Centre who supported them. Staff were described as ‘supportive’, ‘amazing’ and accessible even at a senior level. Some ITE staff corroborated this view, referring to how they might go beyond what was expected of them to support ITE students.

“Mae’r [tiwtor Cymraeg] reit hands on efo fo. . . . Oedd hi fatha, ‘Rywbeth ti eisiau fi checio. Rhwybeth ti eisiau fi... cynllun gwera a ballu, just gyrra fo i fi’. Ac mae hi yn gyrru pethau’n ôl, ac mae hi yn annog ni i yrru pethau i checio.”
(“The [Welsh tutor] is quite hands-on with that. She said, ‘Anything you want

me to check. Anything you want me to . . . lesson plans and stuff, just send it to me'. And she sends things back, and she's encouraging us to send her things to check.") (ITE student)

- 6.9 Similarly, the qualities some ITE students associated with supportive mentors in school included staff who were encouraging, accessible and inspiring. They gave practical tips and helped students identify where they should focus their time. Mentors who helped to keep up morale and confidence levels of the trainee were also considered important to helping an individual complete their training when they might be considering quitting. Highlighting a particularly positive experience, an ITE student explained how there was a dedicated mentor at their current placement school which was invaluable.
- 6.10 Supportive mentors were highlighted by some participants as critical in helping them successfully complete their **NQT induction**. The key, according to one participant, was a mentor who reassured her that she would be there when needed but also left the participant to get on with her job, displaying trust in her abilities. Regular catch-ups with the mentor were also considered valuable as was having mentors in the schools who themselves were still relatively new to teaching. This meant the mentor was very clear on what was required during the induction period.

"I had a fantastic mentor because she had only just gone through the whole process herself. So she was very much aware of what needed to be done and when, what is being looked for. She was really fantastic." (Secondary school teacher)

- 6.11 Participants sometimes identified the **less formal support** around them in helping them to complete training and NQT induction and to remain motivated to teach. Some ITE students referred to the support they received from peers and appreciated any opportunities to talk to each other. They could compare experiences and share issues and ideas. ITE staff at one Centre explained how students returned to the Centre once a week for peer support and to access tutors. This system meant any issues or potential issues a student might be facing could more often than not be addressed before they became too significant.

“We see the pressure they’re under, we know we can change it for them, we can turn it around for them in one meeting, we can support them, we clarify, we help, we put things in place, we go to the wellbeing officer.” (ITE staff)

- 6.12 Feeling part of a **supportive team** from the start was considered by some participants to be an important factor in helping them complete their NQT induction successfully. Proactive support from school staff on the training options available was very much valued. Examples included: help with improving Welsh language skills; ensuring extra non-contact time or ‘NQT time’ was protected; and being given time to observe other teachers when the NQT was struggling. Informal support from colleagues sometimes played a crucial part in maintaining NQTs’ motivation and encouraging them in their work.

“Definitely the school we’re in, the staff [are helping me with my NQT induction]. I feel really supported here and I can go and talk to anyone. There’s the opportunity there to push yourself if you want to, but there’s also no expectation for you to go and do things that you don’t have to do this year.” (Primary school teacher)

- 6.13 Similarly, a sense of **team spirit** and supportive colleagues were identified by some **qualified teachers** as factors that helped to keep them motivated to teach. This also emerged in the online survey. On occasion, it became especially important when a school or a participant was facing challenges. Team spirit could also come to the fore with pupils’ achievements in colleagues’ classes: it was a cause for all to celebrate when a pupil did well. There were references to strong camaraderie and healthy competition as well, for example with sports day, highest attendance rates and so on, that helped to sustain motivation to teach. In addition, it was considered motivating by some to have a supportive team who acted as an effective counter-balance to what might be a difficult day or week at school for an individual.

“The real sense of belonging I think with [this school], with the relationships between teachers, and that’s a massive support network.” (Secondary teacher)

- 6.14 **Feeling valued and recognition** of good work were identified as factors that some participants felt helped them to remain committed to teaching and, for some ITE

students and NQTs at induction, helped to boost their confidence. During training, some participants recalled instances where staff had recognised their work by giving them praise and shown trust in them to take on teaching responsibilities in the classroom. Such situations were occasionally thought to stick in the memory as seminal, motivating moments.

“I had the class on my last practice, the teacher was sick, so they let me have the class as well. That was an amazing feeling.” (Primary school teacher)

- 6.15 For some qualified teachers, feeling valued was also associated with appreciation from parents, a card from a pupil or bumping into a former pupil who had commented on their appreciation of what the teacher had done for them – all of which helped to reinforce motivations to keep teaching. In one rural location, participants stated how recognition from the local community made all the effort seem worthwhile. Non-financial reward and recognition was not prominent in the survey.
- 6.16 Developing this point, **good leadership** emerged on occasion among qualified teachers as a reason for remaining motivated in their roles. In addition to showing staff they were valued, good leaders were associated with being approachable, fair, supportive with pressure, trusting and embracing change. An example was given of a Headteacher who was supportive to staff of their own family needs, so staff felt able to take time off when necessary for family matters. In the online survey, supportive school leaders were not identified as a key factor that currently kept participants teaching.

Literature review: professional support and school culture

- 6.17 Echoing the themes above, one of the key messages from the **literature review** was that the culture of a school including the way it is led and the presence of supportive colleagues, combined with the individual attributes (in particular altruism and a sense of mission) were key factors that encouraged teachers to remain in teaching. A strong emphasis was placed on the need to develop a culture of collegiate support which nurtured and sustained teachers' professional confidence and self-esteem (Dias-Lacy and Guirguis, 2017, Krasnoff, 2014, Schaefer, 2012).

This helped to overcome the danger that a sense of isolation and self-doubt could otherwise develop (Hobson and Ashby, 2012) and offered a means of fostering ‘teacher resilience’ that was an important motivation for people to remain in teaching.

- 6.18 The importance of support from school leaders and other colleagues and the need for them to take a close interest in nurturing those in the early years of their careers was central to the success of such approaches, according to the literature review. The literature highlighted the need for a member of a school’s senior leadership team to be given overall responsibility for supporting practitioners’ professional development. However, responsibility for nurturing colleagues needed to be embedded in the practice of those working at all levels within a school, including middle as well as senior managers (Scheifer, 2012, Beltman, 2011, Dias-Lacy and Guirguis, 2017).
- 6.19 At the same time, the literature suggests that nurturing **a sense of professional autonomy** through meaningful involvement in decision making is also a key factor influencing teachers’ decisions to stay in the profession (Krasnoff, 2014, Hobson and Ashby, 2012). This required schools to have the confidence to give teachers the freedom to experiment and respond to the needs of individuals and groups of learners, subject to appropriate checks and balances. This should nurture teachers’ confidence to be innovative in their professional practice.

The variety of the role

- 6.20 Some qualitative participants, often in primary schools, emphasised the enjoyment, variety, ‘fun’ and ‘joy’ gained from being in the classroom with the children, with the knowledge that ‘every day is different’. One senior teacher in a primary school summed up how ‘every day I have something that really makes me smile, makes me happy’.

Further factors mentioned that helped to maintain commitments to teach

- 6.21 Some less prevalent factors emerged that were believed to support teachers’ and ITE students’ motivation to continue to teach. These are described below.

- 6.22 Some ITE students referred to the positive impact of **work experience** they gained at schools prior to beginning their PGCE. This step was felt to help prepare them for what lay ahead. ITE students at one Centre referred to the external training they had received at a pioneer school which had been inspirational¹⁰.
- 6.23 ITE staff also mentioned these factors to help encourage and maintain ITE students' commitment to training to teach:
- Adopting more stringent recruitment processes meaning that those candidates who gave the impression teaching was not an especially strong draw were not 'just accepted';
 - Ensuring students understood how pupils learn;
 - Ensuring teaching staff at the Centres were familiar with what the day-to-day classroom in a school was like as well as what is required to train teachers;
 - Supporting students with academic tasks as some were new to writing academically;
 - Teaching students how to be self-sustaining professionals.
- 6.24 Despite the above, it was still on occasion acknowledged that a good deal of resilience, 'steel' and passion for the job was required to successfully complete a PGCE, an NQT induction and to be a teacher generally. Seeing the passion and skills of qualified teachers, according to some ITE students, helped to inspire them further in their training, for example wanting to emulate the relationship and rapport the teacher had developed with the pupils.
- 6.25 The **literature examined for this study** emphasised the importance of effective ITE preparation for teaching that ensured practitioners were ready for the demands of the role. ITE needed to prepare entrants for key aspects of the role in particular classroom management (such as recognising learner achievement, helping learners to remain on task, adjusting classroom activities to meet learners' needs and interests) and maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere (Cochran-Smith, 2010, Ingersoll, 2012, Dias-Lacy and Guirguis, 2017).

¹⁰ [Pioneer Schools in Wales are involved in helping to develop Wales' new curriculum.](#)

6.26 However, much of the literature on this subject related to the specific context of the USA where arrangements for initial teacher preparation differ substantially from those in Wales and other parts of the United Kingdom. Moreover, the kind of approaches which were advocated in those studies as alternatives to the challenges identified in the USA were often practices that are embedded (or becoming embedded) in ITE in Wales.

Participants' views on pay and conditions and motivations to continue to teach

6.27 Some qualitative participants commented on how they believed the conditions were unique for having the flexibility to look after their own children during school **holidays**. The holiday entitlement for teachers was quite important to some with families and others in terms of enabling them to 'survive and have a break'. In one example, a parent remarked that the holiday situation was more beneficial for her and the family than her previous role had been in the financial sector. Similarly, there cases where parents could not envisage what life would be like without the school holidays, from a childcare perspective.

"I think that's what keeps me in it now, actually, because my husband's job is really inflexible. So as much as I've thought I've had enough [of teaching] – sorry – it's being able to be there for my children and work fitting around the kids." (Secondary school teacher)

6.28 **Teachers' pay** tended not to be mentioned spontaneously when participants talked about the main factors that kept them in teaching. Some gave the impression that pay was important for being able to 'pay the bills' but that it could become even more important as an individual took on more responsibility in life like a family and a mortgage. It also became more of a factor, some felt, as they approached the end of their career with the prospect of a reasonable pension. There were isolated acknowledgements among senior teachers that they remained in the profession primarily for the pay with retirement on the horizon, as they were disillusioned over workload: 'It's the reason I'm still in the job' as one primary school teacher concluded'. Also, the competitiveness of teachers' pay was recognised among some teachers in one of the more rural areas in the research because the pay was

thought to compare favourably with other options locally. However, pay was not always considered a fair reflection of the amount of work they did.

“Because of how passionate I am about teaching, I don’t think about the money. I don’t think about it. . . . I do that Head of Year job not for the money, it’s for the children.” (Secondary school teacher)

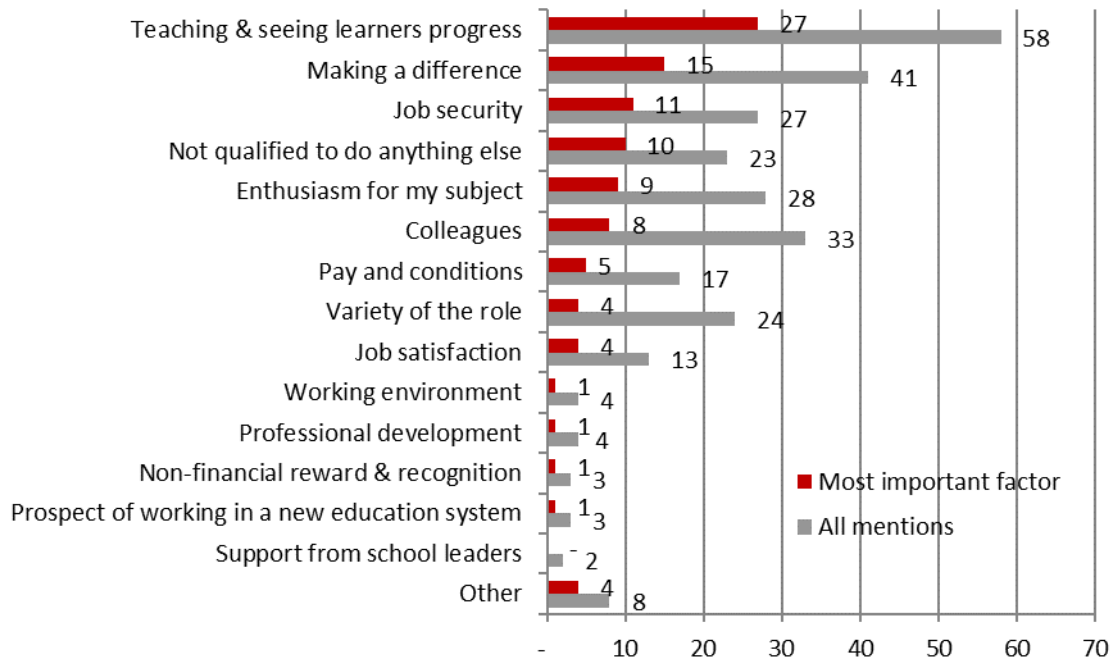
“Fi wastad yn meddwl, yn yr ardal ni’n gweithio... mae’n gyflog da really os ti yn rhoi o mewn persbectif.” (“I always think, in the area we’re working . . . it’s a good salary really if you put it in perspective.”) (Primary school teacher)

Online survey results on reasons for remaining in the profession

- 6.29 Those who were currently working as teachers were asked in the survey what factors kept them teaching. Reflecting their motivations for becoming a teacher, the key prompted factors were ‘teaching and seeing learners progress’ and ‘making a difference’, chosen as one of their top three factors by 58 per cent and 41 per cent respectively of teachers who took part¹¹. Colleagues (chosen by 33 per cent), enthusiasm for their subject (28 per cent), job security (27 per cent but not prevalent in the qualitative findings) and variety of the role (24 per cent) were also mentioned by sizeable proportions of respondents. ‘Pay and conditions’ came relatively low down the list, with overall mentions at 17 per cent.
- 6.30 Less positively, 23 per cent of teachers selected ‘they were not qualified to do anything else’. The proportion saying this rose to 27 per cent of those on fixed term contracts and to 31 per cent of supply teachers; these groups were less satisfied than those on permanent contracts generally with teaching.

¹¹ The EWC’s [National Education Workforce Survey \(April 2017\)](#) produced similar findings: ‘teaching/supporting learners and seeing them progress’ featured highly among all survey groups, as did ‘working with others’. It should be noted, however, that this survey used a different sampling process. [↓](#)

Figure 2: What factors keep you teaching? - prompted (Percentage giving each response)



Base: Those currently teaching (1,757)

- 6.31 As with their motivations for choosing to teach, primary school teachers were more likely than secondary school teachers to mention ‘teaching and seeing learners progress’ and ‘making a difference’ as factors that keep them teaching. However, they were also more likely to say they were ‘not qualified to do anything else’. Enthusiasm for their subject again featured much higher for secondary school teachers than for primary school teachers as a factor keeping them in the profession.
- 6.32 While ‘job security’ was mentioned as a top three factor by 31 per cent of teachers on permanent contracts, it featured much lower for those on fixed term and supply contracts (at 5 per cent and 6 per cent respectively).
- 6.33 As with reasons for becoming a teacher, pay and conditions were more important to those mainly teaching in Welsh than to those mainly teaching in English, selected by 27 per cent of the former as a factor in keeping them teaching compared with 16 per cent of the latter. Those teaching mainly through the medium of Welsh were also more likely to mention job security (32 per cent compared with 26 per cent).

Experiences of the Welsh language among ITE students

- 6.34 This section of the report explores factors concerning the Welsh language that might affect retention among ITE students. It is important to note the small sample of ITE students studying and training in the medium of Welsh and to treat the findings with caution.

Welsh-medium training and associated experiences

- 6.35 Virtually all of the Welsh speaking ITE students had chosen to undertake their training through the medium of Welsh. These participants believed this decision to train through the medium of Welsh made sense, having come through the Welsh-medium education system. Most had completed their undergraduate degrees through the medium of Welsh. However, as noted earlier in the report, it was also believed that there would be **more job opportunities** with the Welsh language. This view was shared by some at NQT induction who had completed their PGCE through the medium of Welsh.
- 6.36 ITE students studying to teach in Welsh were, on the whole, **satisfied with their experiences to date**. There was reference to elements being delivered through the medium of Welsh with only three Welsh speakers on the course. In a further example, a participant had appreciated the fact that a lecturer had made the effort to present the lecture and answer students' questions bilingually.

“[Roedd y darlithydd] yn grêt hefo hynna, lle mae hi'n deud pethau yn Saesneg, ac wedyn 'neith hi ddeud o yn Gymraeg hefyd. Er bod ni i gyd yn gallu deall Saesneg a 'san ni ddigon hawdd yn gallu 'neud y ddarlith yn Saesneg. Ac wedyn, os mae rhywun yn gofyn rhywbeth yn Saesneg, mae hi'n mynd i'r ymdrech i ateb ni yn y Gymraeg. Ac mae hynna'n neis.” (“[The lecturer] was great with that, where she said things in English, she'd also say it in Welsh, too, although we all can understand English and we could easily have the lecture just in English. And then, if someone asks something in English, she makes the effort to answer us in Welsh. And that's nice.”) (ITE student)

- 6.37 Those studying through the medium of Welsh and recently qualified teachers who had undertaken their degree or PGCE course through the medium of Welsh also commented favourably on the smaller classes while studying. For cross-curricular or general education lectures the participants referred to a ‘Welsh group’ where Welsh speakers came together. These group discussions were very much appreciated and felt more like a tutorial than a lecture because of the small numbers involved. On one STEM course the participants commented that it was almost like having one-to-one support because there were so few of them on the course.
- 6.38 Welsh speaking ITE students also **did not voice any reservations** about going on to teach in Welsh-medium schools despite having received some lectures in English. Indeed, experiencing a mix of Welsh and English lectures was considered a benefit on occasion because it enabled students to interact with those on placements in English-medium schools and to share experiences. The flexibility of being able to complete assignments in Welsh or English was also appreciated by some. Less positively, a participant commented how his Welsh-medium assignments were marked by an individual who did not have a background in his subject. He therefore wondered how fair this was.
- “I’ve always known the Maths terms in Welsh, so it doesn’t affect me at all [receiving some lectures in English]. It’s more of the how to teach it side [of things].” (ITE student)
- 6.39 Support had also been available to improve their Welsh language skills. Even so, some stated they had developed their skills once they had begun teaching on placement.
- 6.40 Despite the positive experiences outlined above, there were occasional instances where Welsh-medium students felt at a disadvantage to their English-medium counterparts as their **workload was perceived to be heavier**. Examples given included how they believed they had more assignments than others to complete, more exams and they would be assessed in the classroom from a Welsh language perspective in addition to subject content¹². However, it was also acknowledged that

¹² Welsh-medium students participate in the Welsh-Medium Improvement Scheme (WMIS) described in more detail in this [evaluation report](#).

they were receiving a larger financial incentive than some others for doing the course in Welsh.

“Oherwydd ‘naeth o’ m rili croesi meddwl fi i ‘neud dim byd yn Saesneg, oedd o’n Gymraeg. Ond wedyn, o’n i’n mwynhau'r . . . wel, o’n i’n mynd i’r gwersi wythnosol gwella Cymraeg, ond do’n i ddim yn ymwybodol o’r ffaith bod ‘na waith ychwanegol ynglŷn â hynna ‘lly. Ac mae ‘na arholiad ar y diwedd. Ac mae hynna’n lot o waith wedyn ar ben yr aseiniadau ‘sgen ti’n barod a bob dim fel’na.” (“Because it didn’t cross my mind to do anything in English, it was in Welsh. But then, I enjoyed the . . . well, I went to the weekly lessons to improve Welsh, but I didn’t realise there was extra work to do with that. And there's an exam at the end. And that's a lot of work then on top of the assignments you've already got and everything else.”) (ITE student)

The Welsh language: non-Welsh speaking ITE students’ training experiences

- 6.41 ITE students who were training to teach in English-medium schools gave mixed views on the requirement to use incidental Welsh in the classroom. They stated on the whole that they did not mind the Welsh language lessons that formed part of their training.
- 6.42 However, some did not think it was appropriate to use Welsh in lessons for certain subjects such as English or modern foreign languages, with one participant remarking how pupils sometimes mixed up the foreign language being taught with Welsh words. In addition, the overall aim of using incidental Welsh was not always entirely clear to participants.
- 6.43 Learning and using incidental Welsh was therefore sometimes seen as a ‘tick-box’ exercise. This view could in certain situations be reinforced by students’ experiences on their placements in schools. Students sometimes commented on how they thought different schools took a different approach to Welsh and so the message and aims concerning the Welsh language seemed inconsistent.

“My first placement, I remember one of my notes after my first lesson, was like ‘use incidental Welsh,’ okay, good, awesome, perfectly happy to do that, went on, did it, got really into it, and then second placement I was told not to use

Welsh in the lesson. So I think there's a huge disconnect with how each school deals with Welsh. And I think by extension then, they didn't know how to handle teaching us Welsh in university." (ITE student)

- 6.44 Some participants commented how they were happy with the Welsh language support they received. They were aware of more frequent seminars on offer for those with little Welsh; and these had proved useful, according to some. Sessions were also available for those with more developed Welsh language skills. Participants did not feel daunted about using Welsh in primary school.

"I've had to rely on the [Welsh language] seminars that we've had here which have been great and the resources are all good and the assessments are pitched at a level; at the beginning there is a Welsh assessment for English language students and then you are pitched in the right level seminar group for Welsh." (ITE student)

- 6.45 However, it was occasionally felt that courses to help improve Welsh language skills did not necessarily leave a student feeling able to then pass on that knowledge very effectively to non-Welsh speaking pupils.

Retention and the new curriculum for Wales

- 6.46 In general, the new curriculum for Wales tended not to be mentioned spontaneously when participants discussed teacher retention. When prompted, the principle of the curriculum reform was well received by some participants. It was considered by some to be more inclusive of teachers' views, more focused on the pupil, an exciting development and a potential 'selling point' for the profession on attraction.
- 6.47 However, there was a degree of wariness voiced among teachers regarding the new curriculum. This was due in part to uncertainty with what lay ahead, how it would look, how it would be implemented, what it would cost and what its impact would be on current workload issues and investment in training. There were also occasional concerns that the reform would not last and would be followed by further changes, with one stakeholder likening the reform to a 'political football'.

Factors that can cause doubt about continuing to teach

- 6.48 A range of issues were highlighted on factors that could adversely affect retention, with **workload** and associated pressures featuring as the key theme in the qualitative research and online survey. Stress was also a prominent theme in the online survey. Inconsistent levels of **support**, especially for ITE students and NQTs during induction, emerged as a theme as well.
- 6.49 Feedback from participants who had left or were seriously considering leaving the profession confirmed that workload and the accompanying stress were factors for leaving. In addition, a combination of several factors could play a part in one person's decision to leave teaching. Some of these factors arose at a local level such as leadership issues and a lack of support from **senior leaders** or feeling **unable to ask for help**. There were also isolated examples of pull factors that drew participants away from teaching: the prospect of a less stressful and better paid role; and following up on a lifetime's ambition to run one's own business. Examples of further contributing factors for leaving included: becoming disillusioned with the education system generally; not having enough autonomy in the classroom; managing pupil behaviour; and growing family commitments making it difficult to manage work-life balance.
- 6.50 The report now discusses the themes of workload and support, followed by the range of additional factors mentioned.

Workload and pressure

- 6.51 Participants across the research often referred to workload as a reason for causing doubt about continuing to teach or train to teach. This section explores what this meant across ITE students, NQTs during induction and qualified teachers. Stakeholder views are also considered where they reflected on the same themes.
- 6.52 Some **ITE students** commented that the workload during their PGCE could feel overwhelming through the combination of theory based work, the requirements of placements in school and limited timeframes for completing tasks. Qualified teachers recalling this period of their career often concurred. Having family

commitments while training was considered extremely challenging and a cause for doubt about staying in the profession.

“It is so full-on. It’s the hardest thing I think any of us have ever done in our life.” (ITE student)

6.53 Some current ITE students gave specific examples of the tasks that contributed to their difficulties managing workload. These included marking, completing lesson plans, collating evidence and evaluating lessons, with the reported need to evaluate every lesson being questioned by one student as well. As a further example, the ongoing completion of Professional Development Profiles (PDPs) was described by one ITE student as ‘ridiculous’ and ‘the most pointless exercise ever’. Indeed, he admitted that he did not intend to proceed on to NQT induction but would stay to the end to ensure that he received the final incentive allocation. The prospects of the workload, ‘box-ticking’ and expecting to have very little autonomy during NQT induction were too unappealing. A move to another sector, he added, would also see a more attractive starting salary.

“A dwi’n meddwl, dwi ‘di treulio oriau ar y ffeil [tystiolaeth] ‘ma, a ‘dach chi’m hyd yn oed mynd i sbïo arno fo.” (“And I’m thinking I’ve spent hours on this [evidence] file and you’re not even going to look at it.”) (ITE student)

6.54 The view was expressed among some ITE students that the general intensity of the PGCE year was a reason for peers leaving the course. There were instances where, looking ahead, participants wondered if they would have enough time for planning their lessons once they were qualified teachers. Some were slightly concerned that they did not have a clear idea yet of what the NQT induction would involve. There was an example of students in one discussion not understanding fully why they had received ‘all sorts of codes’ and emails from the EWC in relation to qualifying as teachers and accessing online tools.

6.55 The **written assignments** required of students by the ITE Centres during the PGCE year prompted mixed views regarding their quantity and sometimes value, given how challenging the year was. For some, the work was deemed to be very useful in providing relevant theory to support students’ practical work and learning.

“I do feel like one they relate really well to what we do, and two, if you do have a poorer level of grammar or whatever, they help you set that standard because at the end of the day we are teachers.” (ITE student)

6.56 Some students saw the assignments as less valuable and could not see how they were helping to inform their practical work as student teachers. The assignments were described on occasion as a matter of ‘ticking boxes’ rather than delivering real value. Others believed it was important to have the theoretical learning to help them with their teaching but questioned the need for such extensive assignments, given the general intensity of the PGCE year. Similarly, a teacher at one secondary school was aware of a student teacher at the school who was becoming very anxious over assignments at the expense of preparing effectively for teaching practice which was beginning to suffer.

“I can see a little bit of a link between what we’re doing and what we’re teaching, but I don’t think I need to write six thousand words on it.” (ITE student)

6.57 Some ITE staff also identified the workload and pressure of the PGCE course as factors that could cause students to consider leaving a course. The ‘accountability culture’ within schools was identified among ITE staff in one group as a component contributing to the pressure and stress students could face. Reference was also made to marking, exam results, extracurricular elements and rapid changes in subject specification as factors adding to these pressures. Some ITE staff thought that the length of the PGCE was perfectly suitable for some students but less suitable for others who might benefit from more training and experience before qualification. ITE staff on occasion felt that they had taught students with real potential and who would have benefitted from a slightly longer education period.

6.58 Among ITE students, there were instances where they had **encountered stressed teachers on placement** which had given them cause to question what might lie ahead. According to one participant who had left the profession in 2018 having completed his NQT induction, encountering on placement more senior staff in the secondary school who were negative about the profession and seemed stressed contributed to his decision to leave. He did not want to find himself in a similar situation later in his career. Building on this point, one ITE Centre reported that they

knew of students who had left the course because they had seen the stress teachers were under.

“What I noticed [on placement] is that a lot of the more experienced staff were extremely stressed, and you know, some were quite open about their mental health status as well and I just thought oh my goodness, this does not get easier. I don’t want to be in a job where I’m trapped because I can’t move financially but I hate it and I was really concerned that I’m going to end up middle aged in a job doing millions of hours and feeling as worn down.” (Left secondary school teaching within last year)

- 6.59 There were sometimes concerns among ITE students about the impact of teaching on work-life balance. According to some ITE staff, students who were not adequately prepared before beginning training for what the course and teaching would involve, for example not gaining any classroom experience beforehand, could decide to leave the process as a result.
- 6.60 A member of staff at one Centre admitted that they sometimes felt guilty sending students out into what could be very difficult environments. Also, according to ITE staff in one discussion, mental health issues were thought to be on the rise through a combination of the demands of placements and fulfilling academic requirements. These staff were planning to explore the extent of this issue of mental health among their students. There was a belief, however, that Welsh Government was looking to address issues associated with accountability through its reforms.
- 6.61 In an attempt to pre-empt these situations where students had doubts about continuing with the course, ITE Centre staff explained how they worked closely with schools to identify potential issues as early on as possible. ‘Many’ students were thought to be ‘caught’ and supported in this way, preventing them from leaving. However, the point was also made in another group of staff that the ITE Centres still had to act as ‘gatekeepers’ and not to ‘rubber-stamp’ in terms of ensuring the right students became teachers.
- 6.62 The **NQT induction period** that followed on from the PGCE was sometimes associated with the pressure of workloads and a reason to consider whether or not to continue with teaching. There were references to very early starts in the day and

late night finishes coping with the workload, combined with the pressures of being in the classroom. The idea of having any other responsibilities outside work at the same time, such as family related, could not even be considered according to one teacher.

- 6.63 Illustrating the point, a NQT participant on induction commented how, during teacher education, he had felt very supported and had regularly received positive feedback on his efforts. As a NQT on induction, however, it felt very daunting without the daily support he had experienced the previous year, even though the school as a whole felt supportive. The difference with PGCE was 'stark'. The 'to-do list', he said, was never-ending. Without the support of his partner who was an experienced teacher, this participant doubted that he would still be teaching. He went on to reveal that he was considering leaving because of the issues with workload during NQT induction.
- 6.64 During one focus group with teachers, another NQT on induction participant pointed to a large file they had compiled as a requirement for evidence which reportedly was glanced at as part of the process but was very time-consuming to produce. This teacher did not feel very trusted because of this emphasis on evidence.
- 6.65 Providing a further example of the challenges faced by those on NQT induction, some teachers in one group of secondary school teachers referred to what they saw as the onerous task faced during NQT induction with the 'new teacher standards'. They thought that the system added to the stresses NQTs faced because of the time it took to upload the evidence and also the difficulties experienced in 'trying to find evidence for something that isn't in place', that is, the new curriculum. The time required to upload 'all of this evidence just doesn't exist, this magic time to do it', concluded one participant.
- 6.66 From a **qualified teachers'** perspective, workload also featured as a major factor that could lead teachers to think about leaving the profession at different stages of their career. According to some, staff absence, family duties and a lack of work-life balance could make the issue more acute. Some remarked that workload felt like it had been increasing over the years and there was not enough time to meet all their school based commitments adequately. One secondary school teacher summed up

how teachers were 'expected to do more in less time and it is just constant, things are never taken away, there are always things added onto your job'.

- 6.67 Workload was regularly highlighted among those who no longer taught in school as a factor that had contributed to their decision to leave the profession. Even so, they still missed the time they spent in the classroom teaching.

"I'm leaving teaching at the end of this academic year. . . . I've got a new job . . . going to go and have my evenings and my weekends back. . . . I have pretty much spent the entire [half-term] working but I also work every evening and most of my weekend, and I just was like I don't want to live like this anymore. . . . I love being in the classroom, I absolutely love teaching." (Leaving primary school teaching this year)

- 6.68 The report now gives examples of what teachers had in mind when they referred to workload.

- 6.69 References were made to **data collection** on individual pupils, **accountability**, monitoring, having enough time to set individual targets for children, paper trails, 'targets' linked to National Tests in primary schools and the pressure of achieving grades A-C in secondary school. Data collection and accountability seemed to be ever-increasing in some participants' minds at the expense of ensuring education was enjoyable and engaging for pupils. One former primary school teacher summed up how she came to realise that 'this isn't what I signed up to do. . . . it's not about the fun and the kids anymore and watching them have that light bulb moment and achieve. They are just data'. The value of the data was also questioned on occasion.

"I'm currently filling in a report with a mark sheet with 21 columns. I have to give a Key Stage 3 predicted level in Year 7 and 8 in every term. So, that enables the tracking apparently. I am weighing the baby so often, I never feed it. . . . [There's] current level, predicted level, and a target level. I'm filling in a mark sheet in Key Stage 3 that has got a current oracy level, current reading level, current writing level, current overall level, and then an end of Key Stage predicted level." (Leaving secondary school teaching this year)

6.70 Some teachers commented that they **did not feel very trusted** to do their job because of the accountability and monitoring in place. The sense of having to justify their work and results added to a feeling of a lack of trust in teachers. This perceived situation, according to a former secondary school teacher, ‘never feels like you’re working in partnership, it always feels like you’re being inspected’.

“It just gets a lot trying to track 30 students on every single thing they are doing. And that pressure of have I missed something, am I affecting their learning because I haven’t written this one thing down. . . . It’s a lot of pressure on teachers and I think that’s the main reason why I left.” (Left primary school teaching 3-5 years ago)

“If the children you teach do not produce results, your job can be on the line. . . . We now have a situation where some very good and experienced teachers have chosen to leave the profession rather than carry on coping with the constant pressure and stress and that I think is something that we need to put right.” (Stakeholder)

6.71 There were instances where participants pointed to the importance of the role data had to play with informing teaching and how, for one recently qualified teacher, ‘it’s definitely made me a better practitioner’. It could, though, still seem unduly time-consuming to collect.

“It’s not a negative because it does inform our teaching and I do think we are successful because teachers use our data to inform their teaching, it’s a worthwhile task. . . . It’s time consuming, definitely, but if you do anything properly it’s time consuming isn’t it?” (Secondary school teacher)

6.72 There were infrequent cases where participants felt that the workload was manageable, for example: compared with other sectors; having expected it when first choosing teaching as a career; because an individual had chosen not to progress to a more senior post; and because the job was shared which made workload easier to cope with.

6.73 **Marking** pupils’ books was sometimes used as an example of contributing to primary and secondary school teachers’ struggles with workload. One ex-secondary school teacher gave the example of how a typical week had looked. It involved an

average of 30 pupils in the class, spending ten minutes marking each book and repeating the process across eight different classes. Weekends had become the days for marking. Another teacher thinking of leaving (Maths, secondary) described how she had to provide individual feedback on every child every three weeks. This totalled some 150 children which she found was impossible to do properly with the time available.

- 6.74 More experienced teachers on occasion referred to the need to keep up with what was thought to be **regular change** which could add to the anxiety felt about workload. Examples were sometimes given including 'initiatives' that related to health and safety, GDPR, changes to subject 'specifications' from the 'disorganised' examination board - sometimes reportedly delivered late. It was stated that there had been many initiatives over the years at great expense; and that had not necessarily been very effective.

"It's everything: the Welsh Bac, the LNF [National Literacy and Numeracy Framework] – the goal has to move all the time and I think there isn't sufficient time to embed those changes before the next changes happen." (Secondary school teacher)

- 6.75 Similarly, among stakeholders, it was occasionally felt that regular changes to performance measurement in schools were not conducive to staff retention particularly at senior levels. While it was acknowledged that a move away from focusing on GCSE grades C or above for performance measurement was encouraging, it was also believed that over the last decade or so there had been an increase in monitoring of what pupils and staff were doing, adding to workload. According to one stakeholder, 'it's literally been constant change at the moment. They just announced some more changes. So that just doesn't help. It doesn't help at all. So stop doing that, is what I'd say'.

- 6.76 During discussions, **Welsh-medium teachers** were asked if they felt at a disadvantage generally, compared with those teaching at English-medium schools. The main disadvantage raised related to a **lack of Welsh language resources** versus English language resources which were deemed plentiful. Secondary school teachers sometimes commented on how Welsh language text books for the course

were released later than the English equivalent which could make preparation and planning difficult. Having to translate content added to workload.

“Mae gymaint o amser yn mynd yn naill ai cyfieithu neu yn creu adnoddau newydd . . . yr ysgolion o amgylch ni, fi'n gwybod fod nhw'n dysgu'r cwrs TGAU trwy'r Saesneg ac maen nhw yn gallu jest mynd ar y we, teipio rhywbeth i mewn ac mae fe 'da nhw. Mae just yn cymryd gymaint o amser i ni.” (“So much time is spent either translating or creating new resources . . . the schools around us, I know they're teaching the GCSE course in English so they can just go online, type something in and they've got it. It just takes so much time for us.”) (Secondary school teacher)

- 6.77 Some Welsh-medium teachers remarked that the time taken to translate and prepare Welsh language resources did add to the workload, especially if having to produce material bilingually, but was not a significant problem as it was something they had always expected to do and were willing to do.
- 6.78 On occasion, the Welsh language used in the resources that were available was considered too technical and formal for pupils to understand. Teachers would therefore have to spend time simplifying the language, further adding to their workload. However, some stated that the availability and quality of Welsh language resources had been improving. Teachers mentioned different sources including websites such as Hwb¹³ and Twinkl¹⁴ as well as the 'education department' in the Local Authority as providing useful content.
- 6.79 Turning to the teachers who had left the profession or who were seriously considering leaving (the majority of whom taught in English-medium schools), Welsh language related issues had not contributed to their decision to leave. As an example, one participant commented how he felt 'tristwch' ('saddened') about leaving, knowing that there was a shortage of Welsh teachers generally.
- 6.80 Further, less prevalent factors that were believed to contribute to workload and pressure for teachers included:

¹³ [Hwb](#) is a website and collection of online tools provided to all schools in Wales by the Welsh Government. It was created in response to the 'Find it, Make it, Use it, Share it' report into Digital Learning in Wales.

¹⁴ [Twinkl](#) is a provider of teacher-created planning and assessment materials and teaching resources e.g. lesson plans, schemes of work, assessment, interactive activities and resource packs

- Being answerable to different organisations, such as the Consortia and Local Authority, was thought to add to the pressure and workload, particularly if a school was struggling;
- Having to take on more pastoral duties such as ‘getting in touch with parents and carers, and key workers about homework not being completed, truancy, . . . even as a Classroom Teacher. We’re social workers, mental health workers’;
- Not feeling listened to about concerns over ‘GCSE changes’ and their impact despite having raised the issue (along with many other Heads of Department) with Welsh Government, Qualifications Wales, Estyn and WJEC. This participant, who was seriously considering leaving the profession, was left thinking that ‘they’re still refusing to listen, . . . [and] you’re just like, well, stuff you. Why should I remain loyal?’;
- Increasingly having to manage parents’ behaviour;
- The effect of budget cuts – in this example the participant reported that the invaluable Teaching Assistant in the primary school now had to leave before the end of the day;
- The effort involved with exam preparation, picking out the intervention groups, book checks and parent evenings;
- The impact of increasing class sizes and also trying to meet the needs of pupils in the class who had Special Educational Needs;
- The time required to write pupil reports that are ‘checked and accurate’;
- What was perceived to be entirely unnecessary paperwork, for example having to complete a risk assessment form to take the children over to the next-door park to play.

6.81 The report now turns to a second prominent theme of issues with professional support.

Inconsistent professional support

6.82 Just as supportive systems, cultures and individuals had been highlighted as factors that helped to maintain and strengthen commitments to teach, their absence or inconsistencies in implementation could cause doubt regarding continuing with the profession. Support was mentioned as an issue across different types of participant.

6.83 Some **ITE students** referred to issues with support from school based mentors. There were references, for example, to a mentor who did not appear to have received any training on the mentoring role which added to the pressure the student was already experiencing. It was also acknowledged among ITE staff in one discussion that it could be difficult for mentors to find enough time to fulfil their duties effectively.

“Dwi’n meddwl bod o’n dibynu yn llwyr ar dy fentor di. Achos blwyddyn yma o’n i efo un oedd yn trio helpu. Flwyddyn ddiwethaf, ‘naeth hi ddim mynd ar yr hyfforddiant i fod yn fentor, so doedd hi ddim hefo syniad be oedd hi’n ‘neud.”
 (“I think it completely depends on your mentor. Because this year I was with one who was trying to help. Last year, she did not go on the training to be a mentor, so she didn’t have a clue what she was doing.”) (ITE student)

6.84 In further cases, being paired with a mentor on a first placement whose approach felt entirely unsupportive was found to be very demoralising. For this participant, ‘it all depends way too much on your mentor. It can make or break your placement’. There was an awareness of peers having dropped out of teacher training because of this experience. Coupled with this factor, mentors who seemed to have lost the passion for teaching and to have forgotten what it was like to be a student teacher were thought by some ITE students to be less effective in their supporting role.

6.85 More broadly, some ITE students pointed to **different cultures within schools** and how this affected their own outlook on the profession. Placements could include schools with ‘very strong leadership’ and a ‘whole school ethos - there was healthy, effective challenge and they would do anything for their Headteacher and that loyalty was just incredible’. This environment of positivity was in contrast to some other placements where there were teachers who were unhappy in their roles, ‘jaded’, seemed stressed and even queried the student’s career choice. It could

result in the student 'absorbing negativity instead of all those wonderful things' experienced on a previous placement.

"O be dwi 'di weld o rhai athrawon, mae lot o'r athrawon yn deud, 'O, 'swn i 'di licio 'neud swydd arall'. Ac maen nhw mor negyddol amdan y job. 'Di o ddim yn rili helpu ni pan 'dan ni'n trio . . . 'dan ni just yn dechrau. Ac maen nhw'n deu'tha ni, 'What are you doing?' Mae'n anodd weithiau pan 'dan ni'n clywed hynna." ("From what I've seen of teachers, a lot of teachers say 'Oh, I wish I'd done another job'. And they are so negative about it. It doesn't really help us when we are trying . . . we're just starting. And they ask us 'what are you doing?' It's hard sometimes when we hear that.") (ITE student)

6.86 Further, occasional references among ITE students and participants who had left or planned to leave the profession relating to issues with support included **managing pupils' behaviour** in class. For one student, the issue had been 'horrendous' with a particular class having significant behavioural issues. The participant had been aware of this challenging class before the placement started and had approached the ITE Centre for help, expecting it to be difficult. However, very little help was forthcoming from the ITE Centre, according to the participant. After this negative experience, the participant doubted that they would go on to teach, having completed the PGCE.

6.87 There were instances where participants during NQT induction on occasion did not think how they were supported was consistent based on discussions with peers. For example, during extra non-contact time, some peers were required to 'do things for the school' rather than tasks related to their NQT induction for which the funding had reportedly been set aside. It was felt that not enough was done to monitor how schools supervised this time. In another case, a participant had felt quite alone during induction and therefore did not feel sufficiently supported to be able to rely on the mentor for help when needed.

"I got on really well with my mentor. But then, on other times, I did feel very alone. I remember cutting things out in the corridor, one day, just crying because I was trying to find schemes of work and things, and everyone else was so busy." (Primary school teacher)

- 6.88 The lack of support as a NQT supply teacher on induction had contributed to a former teacher deciding to leave the profession. He had experienced virtually no support from the school and no feedback on how he was performing. During the induction period he had been assigned several external mentors and, at one point, had needed to involve the Local Authority in the process to ensure that he received the support needed. More broadly, a perceived lack of jobs available for teachers who were recently qualified was mentioned among stakeholders and teachers as a factor that could prompt individuals to leave the profession.
- 6.89 Some **teachers**, including those who had left, referred to the impact that workload and pressures had on their **mental health and wellbeing**. In the online survey, just over four in ten (41 per cent) mentioned stress as a reason for having left the profession. The anxiety and stress that some had experienced, combined with a perceived lack of support, contributed to their decision to leave the profession. According to one former teacher, senior leaders ‘don’t have mental health training, they don’t have behaviour support training when they do their NPQHs, . . . it’s not embedded in their culture’. Older teachers from time to time wondered how they would last until retirement age given the perceived impact of the job on health and wellbeing. There were also perceptions among former teachers and those seriously considering leaving that it could be difficult to admit to colleagues that they were failing to cope with workload and pressures by asking for help.
- “If you admit to mental illness in teaching, the culture of that is still very negative, it’s seen as a sign of weakness. . . . My children said ‘Mum, why do you cry all the time?’ ‘Mum why don’t we see you?’ . . . To hear those things is horrible.” (Left primary school this year)
- “Students and staff are buckling as yet more changes get pushed through year on year by WAG and the workload just keeps building. People can’t take it anymore. I should also have pointed out that I’m not workshy. I take pride in my performance and care about the students but at my own detriment because I burn out regularly.” (Secondary school teacher considering leaving)
- 6.90 Issues with support, based on the view from current and former teachers, could stem from **poor leadership**, with situations like those described above where an individual did not feel able to ask for help. The online survey found that less

experienced teachers were more likely to refer to a lack of support from school leaders, as described later in this section.

6.91 Further examples from former teachers that related to leadership issues affecting their decision to leave included:

- A lack of support and training with new responsibilities;
- A period of 'bullying' from a more senior colleague which went on to adversely affect the individual's health;
- A Headteacher who appeared to be disinterested in workload challenges and the impact this was having on the individual's family commitments;
- A Headteacher who challenged an individual's professional opinion on pupils' attainment levels;
- Clashing with a senior leader over expectations of the participant and the responsibilities they were required to take on, as well as a fundamental disagreement on what was best for pupils;
- No acknowledgement of the stress a participant was experiencing and no opportunity for regular catch-ups with the senior leader;
- Senior leaders themselves giving an impression that they were very stressed and under pressure which in turn meant that others were reluctant to approach them with their own concerns.

Career progression and professional development

6.92 Less prevalent issues related to career progression and professional development. It was also a theme from the literature review (discussed later in this section). A view was expressed among participants that sometimes there was not a great deal of time, encouragement or enabling to help teachers in these areas. The opportunities within teaching had been less clear to some as well; and this was sometimes still thought to be the case, with senior leadership positions and Headships the main positions to aim for.

- 6.93 There were infrequent instances where primary school participants commented on how progression opportunities now seemed more limited, for example hindered by a lack of SLT roles available: 'until you've got that experience you can't then go on to things like Deputy Heads and Headships'. Participants in one primary school remarked that increasing workload could mean that professional development was not something they thought about. An apparent lack of time or financial support for additional work that would contribute to career progression and professional development was therefore noted.
- 6.94 As described earlier, Headships and Deputy Headships were not very appealing roles to aspire to for some participants: the roles centred on management rather than teaching and the pressures were too great to make it worthwhile.
- 6.95 The potential for a lack of clear career progression and professional development to affect retention was also noted occasionally among stakeholders. Having qualified as a teacher, it was not necessarily considered obvious to new teachers what their career path would be and that it could depend on the type of leadership in the school as to the opportunities that were available.

Literature review: focus of practitioners' professional development

- 6.96 The importance of facilitating access to ongoing professional development opportunities was evident where schools were effective in reducing attrition, according to the literature reviewed for this study. The negative effects of not doing so was very evident in the findings that many of those leaving the profession felt they had not accessed those opportunities either because they were not encouraged to do so or because the necessary structures were not in place (Dias-Lacy and Guirguis, 2017, Krasnoff, 2014).
- 6.97 The evidence highlighted the importance of opportunities for early career teachers to work with more experienced colleagues, an approach that was seen as far more beneficial than traditional course models because it enabled them to access professional experiences that were active, hands on, and led by experienced staff in the school (Krasnoff, 2014). This helped overcome what Hobson and Ashby (2012) described as the problems that arose when teachers 'saw their professional

development as impeded by social and/or physical isolation, which prevented them from accessing ‘instruction-related’ or ‘psychological’ support (Hobson and Ashby, 2012).

6.98 The focus of the work needed to be on enabling all staff, especially those in the early stages of their careers, to develop their pedagogy in a way that was ‘explicitly related to pupil learning and had identifiable applications on their teaching’ (Hobson and Ashby, 2012). This meant focusing on learning and practical tasks such as:

- Lesson planning;
- Developing an understanding of what is required to enable learners to succeed;
- Problem solving in the classroom.

6.99 At the same time, teachers needed to be provided with opportunities to discuss and work through other challenges such as:

- How to handle behavioural problems (linked to the evidence that early career teachers lack the strategies/coping mechanisms more experienced colleagues have developed);
- How to develop effective strategies to meet the needs of specific groups of learners.

(Beltman, 2011, Dias-Lacy and Guirguis, 2017, Krasnoff, 2014, Hobson & Ashby, 2012).

6.100 Teachers should also be supported to undertake work linked to assessment (especially the demands of high stakes testing) and to cope with tasks related to school administrative, management and accountability structures (Ingersoll, 2011, Krasnoff, 2014).

6.101 This helped to develop what Krasnoff (2014) defined as work that was grounded in the reality of the day-to-day requirements of teaching in which ‘job-embedded collaboration with a focus on student results’ fostered a climate in which ‘teachers feel less isolated and experience a greater sense of confidence and job satisfaction’ (Krasnoff, 2014).

- 6.102 According to Krasnoff (2014) this needed to be an integral part of schools' culture, on the grounds that 'both novice and experienced teachers are attracted primarily to principals who are good instructional leaders, to like-minded colleagues who are committed to the same goals, to teaching conditions and readily available, relevant instructional materials and to learning support that enables them to be effective' (Krasnoff, 2014).
- 6.103 For such approaches to be effective, it was important that schools recognised the impact of teachers' workload (classroom teaching, administration/bureaucracy, assessment, evidence gathering etc.) and were able to mitigate these pressures, as far as possible.

Literature review: structure of teachers' professional development

- 6.104 Waterman and He (2011) suggest that developing professional learning communities (akin to what in Wales is defined as 'a group of practitioners working together using a structured process of enquiry to focus on a specific area of their teaching to improve learner outcomes and so raise school standards' (Learning Wales)) was the most effective means of supporting practitioners across schools (Waterman and He, 2011). This meant giving priority to this aspect of a teachers' work notwithstanding other pressures on school budgets (Adriaenm 2012). A similar message was conveyed by Hobson and Ashby, (2012) who emphasised the importance for teachers to access such support 'as and when they need it'.

Literature review: broadening support for early career teachers

- 6.105 The literature identified examples where positive benefits had arisen of professional support being extended to all early career teachers, not only to those involved in formal mentoring programmes in their first year of teaching (Krasnoff, 2014). This was designed to ensure that they were supported when 'the genuine reality of a fully qualified teacher takes effect and many are not prepared for the experience' (Hobson and Ashby, 2012). This offered a means 'to empower beginner teachers to move gradually towards autonomy: to encourage them to cope with progressively

less assistance while still proactively seeking help when it is needed' (Hobson and Ashby, 2012).

- 6.106 The literature suggested that early career teachers had benefited where the mentoring and support processes were distinct and separate from any line management or assessment of performance. This meant that those providing the support were not the same individuals who later had to make judgements about a teacher's performance (Hobson and Ashby, 2012). This fostered a more open professional dialogue in which early career teachers were happier discussing the challenges they faced and working with more experienced colleagues to identify potential solutions.

The impact of fixed term contracts

- 6.107 It was not possible to explore in depth the impact of fixed term contracts given the sample composition and no dedicated sample of headteachers or those on NQT induction who might be more likely to be affected. However, the topic was still raised on occasion. References were made to using fixed term or temporary contracts as a means of gauging how suitable a teacher would be and 'to have a look at somebody' while at the same time making it easier for the school to 'let the individual go' if the teacher was not thought to be suitable for the role or was someone 'sydd ddim yn siwtio'r ysgol' ('who doesn't suit the school'). There would not be the requirement for a 'full blown, formal redundancy process'. There was awareness among stakeholders of those on NQT induction who had decided to retrain in other sectors because they could not secure a permanent contract as a teacher.

"I think in a way it's useful, I think it allows managers to for want of a better word get rid of people who haven't been up to the job. We've had a few people who they've taken on fixed term and it just hasn't worked out." (Primary school teacher)

- 6.108 A second reported use of fixed term contacts was where a school had budgetary issues. An inability for the school to plan ahead financially meant that regularly extended fixed term contracts were used in case further budget cuts were needed

at the school. An example was given of a small rural primary school where budgets were said to fluctuate annually to the extent that the school could not commit to permanent contracts: ‘Mae’n anodd iawn blaengynllunio. Mae’n amhosib, deud y gwir’ (‘It’s very difficult to plan ahead. It’s impossible, tell the truth’).

“We do [use fixed term contracts] at the moment, but that’s because we are in financial difficulty. We wouldn’t be doing that . . . but because we’ve been in financial difficulty now for [x] years, we’ve gone with fixed term contracts that generally get extended and extended. We can’t make any long-term plans with our finances.” (Secondary school)

6.109 Looking further at the quantitative results by type of contract, the table below shows that respondents who had qualified in the last two years were much more likely to be on fixed term contracts and be working as supply teachers (and much less likely to be on permanent contracts) than was the case overall. (Caution is needed with these results given small base sizes.)

Table 6.1: Type of teaching contract for respondents who qualified in the last two years

Type of contract	Qualified in the last two years* (112)	% Total sample (1,945)
Permanent contract	40	86
Fixed term contract	39	8
Supply teacher	21	7

Source: Online quantitative survey for this study. *Note: small base size.

6.110 However, no link was identified between when teachers qualified and attitudes and motivations to teach. For example, there was a small difference in the proportion of those who qualified recently (in the last two years) mentioning ‘job security’ as one of their top three reasons for continuing teaching – 25 per cent compared with 27 per cent overall. Also, recently qualified teachers were slightly more likely to say the ‘attraction of a stable job’ was one of their top three reasons for going into teaching as a career (28 per cent of those who qualified in the last two years compared with 25 per cent overall).

6.111 Fixed term contracts and supply teacher roles become more evident when exploring type of contract last held among those who had left teaching. Leavers were less likely to have been on permanent contracts than the total sample overall.

Table 6.2: Type of teaching contract for respondents who have left teaching

Type of contract	All leavers (188)	Total sample (1,945)	%
Permanent contract	66	85	
Fixed term contract	17	8	
Supply teacher	17	7	

Source: Online quantitative survey for this study

Seeking support when considering leaving the profession

6.112 In relation to seeking support, this research elicited a mix of opinions, experiences and behaviours among participants in the qualitative research who had left or were seriously considering leaving the profession.

6.113 There tended not to be a clear pattern regarding who to approach when they needed help. Some were unaware of the support options available and it had not crossed their minds to consider approaching, occupational health or HR support from the Local Authority. Instead some relied on conversations with family or colleagues. The point was also made that it was possible to not be in the right frame of mind to seek help when struggling with work.

“I think when you’re in that situation you can’t see a way out and you don’t always think very clearly either.” (Left primary school teaching 1-2 years ago)

6.114 In terms of **support within the school**, there were cases where senior colleagues had been approached, for example in relation to managing classroom behaviour and workload. In a few instances, the resulting support was deemed well intended but insufficient. Examples included: a colleague helping out for a very short amount of time each week; allowing the teacher to go home for the day; and a Headteacher observing a class for a recently qualified teacher and feeding back to the participant

that they had done a good job but failing to realise how the teacher was still struggling.

“It was good that [the Headteacher] gave her time to come and see how I was doing, but the feedback was just, ‘What you’re doing is good’. But my response was, ‘But I don’t feel good’. You know, ‘I’m struggling with it’. So, not much was done there.” (Leaving secondary school teaching this year)

6.115 Some participants referred to how it had seemed difficult to ask for help within the school. They were reluctant to admit that they were experiencing issues at the risk of being labelled ‘weak’ and also it did not seem right to complain given that other teachers, including senior leaders, appeared to be under a good deal of pressure themselves. The consequence of taking sick leave had been considered on occasion, with participants not wanting to add further pressure to colleagues.

“I just held my hands up and said ‘I’m going’ and I didn’t pursue it because even my managers were breaking their own workload agreements on their own time, never mind mine.” (Left primary school teaching this year)

6.116 In terms of **external support options**, a union had been approached in a few instances. In one case it had advised the participant to ‘step back from school for a while and be off sick’, with the participant eventually leaving through stress. In another case, the union had helped by contacting the Local Authority to organise support for a supply teacher with the NQT induction evaluation. The Education Support Partnership had provided valuable support for one participant¹⁵.

6.117 In addition, there were isolated examples of accessing counselling and HR support from the Local Authority but these were not deemed to have been very useful. For example: becoming aware of the option when it was felt to be too late; and a situation where it was felt that the Local Authority HR support seemed intent on ‘burying’ the issue.

6.118 Furthermore, there was wariness expressed among participants who had left or were considering leaving in involving external organisations with the issues experienced, for example not wanting to ‘antagonise’ the school leadership, possibly lose their job or seem disloyal to colleagues.

¹⁵ A [UK charity](#) providing mental health and wellbeing support services to all education staff and organisations.

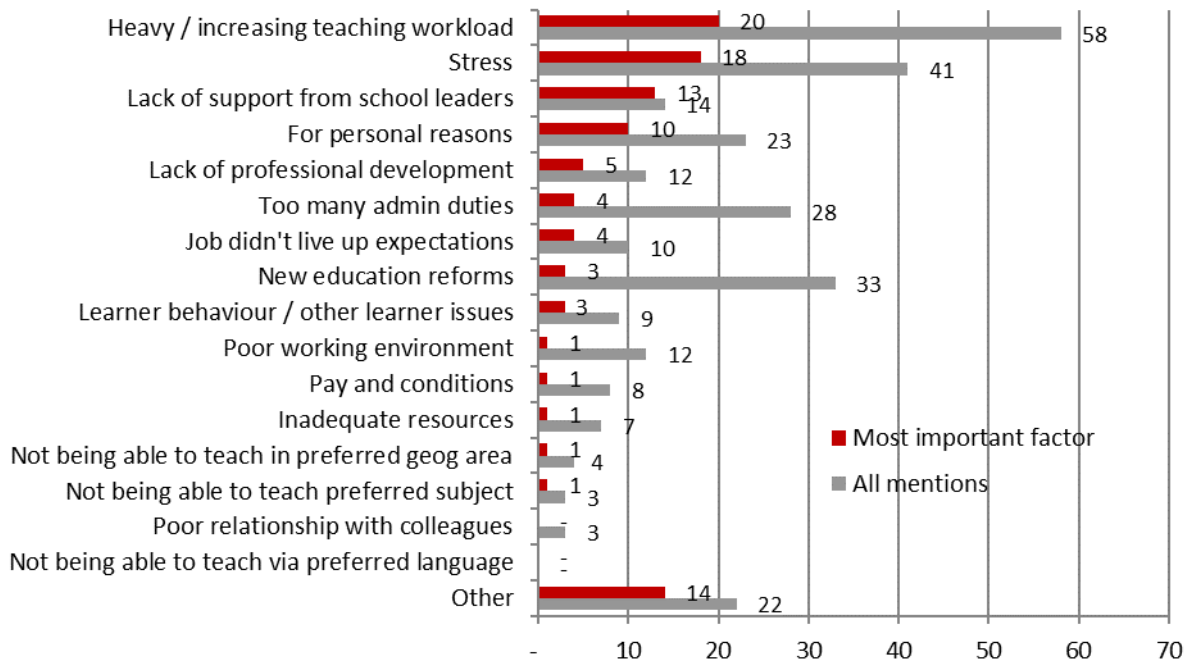
“I didn’t really want to go down a route which felt like it was going behind anyone’s backs. Because they were looking out for me in terms of asking if I was okay and things, so I didn’t go there.” (Leaving secondary school teaching this year)

Online survey: reasons for leaving the profession

- 6.119 Those who had left the profession were asked in the online survey which possible reasons for leaving teaching applied to them. The overall key findings mirror the qualitative findings.
- 6.120 ‘Heavy / increasing teaching workload’ and ‘stress’ were the top reasons for leaving: around one in five leavers (20 per cent and 18 per cent respectively)¹⁶. Around one in ten leavers mentioned a ‘lack of support from school leaders’ (13 per cent) and ‘personal reasons’ (10 per cent), while first mentions of all other reasons were at lower levels.
- 6.121 Looking at the leavers’ results for recently qualified teachers, the survey found that those who had qualified in the last two years were more likely to mention ‘lack of support from school leaders’ (their third most mentioned reason at 34 per cent). Their top two most mentioned reasons were ‘heavy / increasing teaching workload’ and ‘stress’.
- 6.122 Workload also dominates when looking at participants’ three most important reasons for leaving the profession, with almost six in ten leavers (58 per cent) saying it was a factor. Just over four in ten mentioned stress (41 per cent) and around three in ten mentioned the Welsh Government’s new education reforms (33 per cent) and the burden of administrative duties (28 per cent). ‘Pay and conditions’ came much lower down the list and was mentioned by fewer than one in ten leavers (8 per cent) as one of their main three reasons for leaving the teaching profession. However, leavers who had qualified in the last two years were more likely to mention ‘pay and conditions’ (their fourth most mentioned reason at 31 per cent).

¹⁶ The EWC [National Education Workforce Survey \(April 2017\)](#) found that Workload was shared as the least rewarding aspects of registrants’ roles. The administration burden also featured highly for teachers.

Figure 3: Reasons for leaving teaching - prompted (Percentage giving each response)



Base: Those who have actively left teaching, excluding redundancies, retirement and fixed term contracts coming to an end (138)

Suggestions among participants for improving teacher retention

- 6.123 Two common suggestions among participants in the qualitative research for improving teacher retention related to **workload** and, particularly for ITE students and those on NQT induction, professional **support**. These themes reflect the main topics that emerged from the research on retention issues.
- 6.124 Each theme is discussed below, with suggestions grouped according to the teacher career journey: ITE students; NQT induction; and fully qualified teachers.

Addressing workload issues

- 6.125 Suggestions centred on reducing workload and freeing up time for teachers to manage their workload more effectively.

6.126 Examples of suggestions from **ITE students** included:

- Minimising the number of ‘targets’ a student teacher is given to work on; or mentors providing thematic feedback rather than individual lesson feedback. Fewer observed lessons was another suggestion that it was thought would help with the pressure associated with preparation;
- Preparing ITE students more effectively for what lies ahead with NQT induction and workload;
- Providing more lesson plan templates for student teachers to adapt;
- Providing more support with how to manage time effectively during the course;
- Reducing the volume and / or number of assignments that ITE students are required to complete, with more focus on time in the classroom;
- Spreading out external school training days across the two placements rather than only during the second placement so that the second placement is not so disrupted.

6.127 For improving workload issues during **NQT induction**, suggestions included:

- Continuing to support NQT induction teachers after achieving QTS with guidance on how to manage their workload and prioritise tasks;
- Looking at ways of reducing the ‘box-ticking’ required for completing the NQT file during induction;
- Providing more funding to give those on NQT induction extra non-contact time so that they have more time for reflection, meeting their required standards, planning and remaining on top of their workload;
- Reviewing the online process of submitting evidence which was raised as an issue on occasion. There was a query as to why all the evidence had to be compiled into one file versus the NQT showing an example of a report when required.

6.128 From the perspective of a fully **qualified teacher**, suggestions tended to focus on reducing the workload and pressure associated with **data collection**, **accountability**, ‘monitoring’ and inspections: ‘Ma na obsesiwn hefo ystadegau’ (‘there is an obsession with statistics’) as one former secondary school teacher summed up.

“Get rid of the stuff, those hoops that you have to jump through that actually don’t make a difference to the progress and the lives of children and therefore the teachers.” (Secondary school teacher)

6.129 It was sometimes thought that improvements in the way pupils are assessed could help with retention as well as workload. Some stated that they wanted to see more trust in teachers’ ability and professional judgement to do a good job: ‘let teachers decide on all the paperwork that needs to be done’ as one former teacher asserted. A shift away from so much data collection, some felt, would in turn help with motivation levels.

“Er engraifft, mae’r disgwyliad ‘ma bod ni’n craffu ar ddata drwy’r amser. A bod ni’n gorfod cyfiawnhau ein hunain gan ddefnyddio data; mae hwnna’n broblem. Mae’r holl ddogfennaeth yma: hunan arfarniad, cynllun gwella, rheoli perfformiad, arsylwi gwersi.” (“For example, this expectation for us to analyse the data at all times. And we have to justify ourselves using data; that is a problem. All of this documentation is: self-evaluation, improvement plan, performance management, lesson observation.”) (Considering leaving secondary school teaching)

6.130 From time to time there was awareness of plans in Wales to address assessment which was welcomed, as long as the pupil’s voice was given sufficient emphasis as a means of assessing teachers and evaluating accountability. Some participants explained how they wanted teaching to be about the children and not only about ‘numbers, data and proving yourself all the time’. ‘Value added’ was believed by some to be the way forward with performance measurement, for example among staff in a primary school with children who struggled with numeracy and literacy.

6.131 Linking with workload issues, there were specific suggestions for exploring how **more time can be freed up for teachers** to manage their work more effectively and to ensure that they can focus on pedagogy. In addition to reducing ‘red tape’ that ‘doesn’t make a difference’, suggestions here included smaller class sizes, fewer teaching hours and extra support in the classroom. Employing subject-specific teachers in primary school was also put forward as a means of freeing up time for existing teachers.

“In anticipation of next year [post NQT induction], I know that frees [time set aside for teachers for planning, preparation and assessment] will go down by about half. I couldn’t imagine that. I couldn’t imagine being able to do that. I think probably the amount of frees I’ve got right now is just about okay over the two weeks.” (Leaving secondary school teaching this year)

6.132 Further, less prevalent suggestions in relation to reducing teachers’ workload included:

- Continuing to invest in creating school business managers to help senior leaders with the administrative burden – ‘a good start’ according to an ITE member of staff but there was still a doubt about budget being available to roll the initiative out more widely;
- Employing more teachers to help with workload and with reportedly increasing class sizes;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of a guidance leaflet on managing workload that had been issued to schools¹⁷;
- Helping teachers in Welsh-medium and bilingual schools to produce the appropriate material for lessons;
- Providing training on how to prioritise workload and make more effective use of PPA time;
- Reducing workload relating to the number of classes a secondary school teacher has to teach. References were made to the difficulty and stress involved with staying on top of marking.

Improving support

6.133 The suggestion was made that **improving the consistency of mentoring**, particularly those who were school based, would help with the retention of **ITE students and those on NQT induction**. It was also suggested that more use could be made of mentors who were less experienced teachers. They were considered by some as more likely to have a clear understanding of the requirements of ITE

¹⁷ [Reducing workload: a guide for teachers and Headteachers September 2017](#)

students and NQT induction and to be more passionate about the role than those who had been teaching for longer.

- 6.134 More training was suggested for mentors together with greater thought being put into how they were matched up with students. More consistency in the support and guidance received from ITE Centre tutors was also proposed. A participant who was mentoring a NQT commented how, ‘as a mentor, I find it quite challenging because we’ve got the standard from [the ITE Centre]. We work with [two other Centres], we’re working on the GTP programme, we’ve got the NQT standards. So this has been my first year doing this and I’ve struggled a bit to understand all the slightly different standards’¹⁸.

“I do think that the calibre and then the quality of what you get from a mentor should be consistent.” (ITE student)

- 6.135 Consistency on how mentors or tutors provided feedback was a further area for improvement on occasion, so that it felt constructive and motivating. A participant referred to the hard work they put in, only to ‘have it slammed’ for missing some paperwork. In addition, ensuring students were recognised for their work and felt trusted where it was deserved were believed by some to be effective ways of improving motivation during this period. A further idea was for paired placements for students so that they could share experiences and support each other.
- 6.136 In relation to supporting ITE students and their development, there was a suggestion for **allowing longer than a year for the PGCE for some students**. Mentioned among ITE staff and qualified teachers, this improvement would give students time to develop a more in-depth understanding of children and teaching, as well as experiencing placements. ITE staff occasionally stated how students learned at different speeds. There were also instances described of students leaving courses who, with a little more time, might have successfully completed the PGCE and continued to be good teachers.

¹⁸ The professional standards for teaching and leadership are being rolled out on a phased basis. NQTs undertaking induction from September 2017 used the new standards. All teachers and leaders began using the standards in September 2018. From September 2019, students entering ITE will adopt the new standards.

“I think where students struggle, they need a bit of extra time and the programme is unforgiving, there isn’t that time, there is no slack in the system.” (ITE staff)

- 6.137 Expanding on this suggestion, ITE staff and stakeholders occasionally commented that more space and time needed to be built into the system within schools so that those on NQT induction and early career teachers continued to receive the kind of support they experienced when taking their PGCE, which in turn would help with professional development. Some ITE staff felt it was important that NQT induction was perceived as a ‘development year’ and supported as such. The idea was raised of introducing a two year teacher training programme with NQT induction built in. It was thought that this would enable students to continue to benefit from peer support as well as potentially making it easier for early and more targeted interventions where a student needed help. According to some ITE staff, however, the support for NQT induction was believed to be much improved with a more coherent approach.
- 6.138 A further point made among ITE staff was that ITE Centres could become more involved in their ex-students’ professional development, for example with bespoke training or mentoring, with PGCE being seen instead as a first step. It was felt that this focus on developing longer term relationships could help with teacher retention and with keeping Wales-trained teachers in Wales.
- 6.139 From a training and experience perspective, it was suggested among teachers that ITE students and those on NQT induction would benefit from greater exposure to and training on managing **classroom behaviours** so that they were more prepared when they encountered such situations. Difficulties with classroom behaviour had occasionally contributed to decisions to leave the profession.
- 6.140 In terms of improving support for **teachers**, participants occasionally suggested that more support was needed with **mental health and wellbeing**, for example with more training for senior leadership teams. Among those who had left teaching or were seriously considering it, there was believed to be room to improve on ensuring support was available and visible to teachers; and that teachers felt comfortable asking for help when needed.

“I think to some extent the education system is in the dark ages where human resources is concerned. And there’s a massive irony because I think there’s been huge progress made with how we respond to kids and recognise signs of need and nurture them”. (Leaving secondary school teaching this year)

- 6.141 Adding to this theme, there were occasional suggestions for teachers to be offered the opportunity to take a sabbatical to pursue a project for a number of months to help them maintain their enthusiasm for the role, develop new skills and to ‘recharge their batteries’.
- 6.142 It was also suggested that the HR function in Local Authorities could be devolved to the four Regional Education Consortia. The participant proposing this change thought that having four HR staff who specialised in education ‘would result in the provision of a high quality service and support to teachers - it could include ‘a much more holistic view of their wellbeing’.
- 6.143 In addition to the suggested improvements above on workload and support, other less prevalent points are given below.
- 6.144 **Reducing the amount of change and allowing reforms time to bed in** - From time to time participants called for an end to what was perceived to be constant change and for reassurances that there would be stability after current reforms and changes had been introduced. More and better quality communication regarding the vision for reforms was also thought to be needed on occasion to help ‘sell’ them to the profession and give greater clarity.
- 6.145 Stakeholders occasionally stated that **career progression** needed to be available and promoted at all levels with a strong commitment to investing in lifelong learning. This in turn would contribute to staff feeling valued and motivated so that ‘once they enter the profession, they remain in it’. Suggestions included:
- Ensuring professional development opportunities are accessible, promoted and perhaps a requirement like other countries, with ‘a shift towards professional learning communities within the sector’;
 - Ensuring there was a range of different pathways to choose: ‘if you want to focus on becoming a really excellent classroom teacher, and that’s the path you want to go down, this is what you can do. If you want to focus on developing skills for

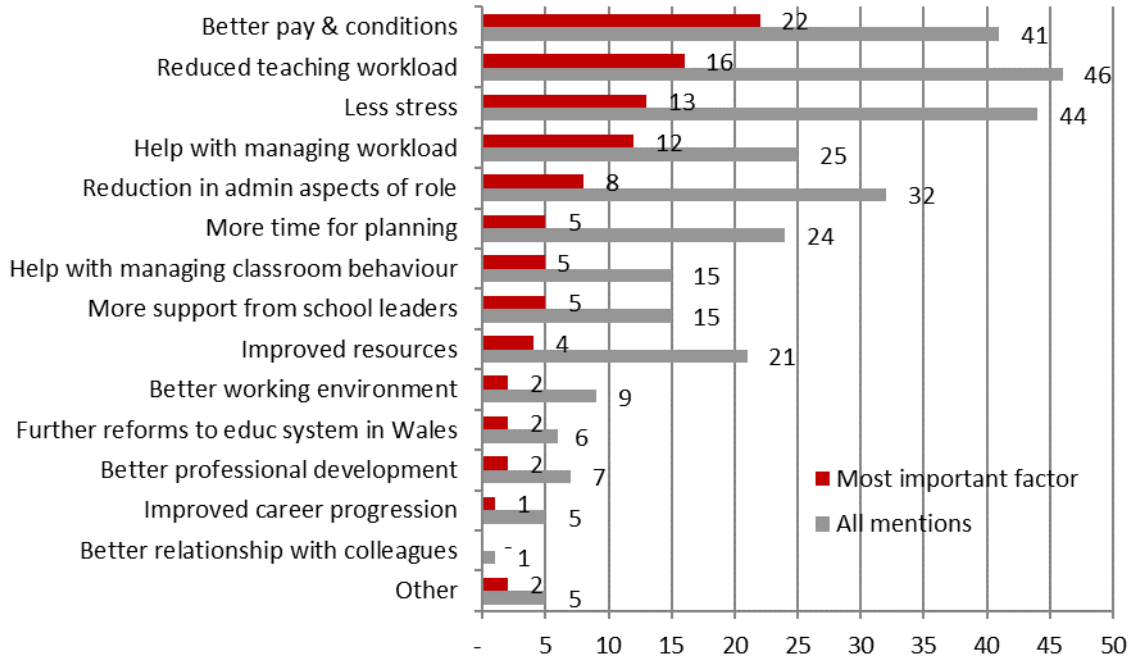
a pastoral role [or] to become a head of year or head of house, you can do it if you want. Become a really great subject specialist, and become a second in department, or head of department'.

- 6.146 **Improving the status of teaching generally** - As discussed earlier in this report, participants tended to feel that improved perceptions of the profession generally would be beneficial. In addition to making it more attractive it might, some felt, also help with retention, for example resulting in greater respect for teachers and teachers themselves feeling more valued and motivated.
- 6.147 Greater non-financial recognition would further help with retention and perceptions of the profession. There was a request among participants for Welsh Government to be more supportive of the teaching profession and its achievements rather than reportedly criticising levels of progress. More recognition within schools of teachers' 'hard work' was also proposed.
- 6.148 **Encouraging more collaboration** - Some participants felt that more effective collaboration or 'federation' between schools would help to support retention, through allowing teachers to be seconded to other schools. Participants making this suggestion expected it to result in learning good practice from others and knowledge sharing in general. It would also help with maintaining motivation levels and enthusiasm for the job. It was acknowledged that 'school-to-school training' took place but, according to some teachers, these events largely meant the hosting school 'putting on a show' rather than a genuine opportunity to see how another school works in reality. More collaboration, it was believed, might help to reduce 'competitiveness' between schools.
- 6.149 Suggestions related to **finance** to encourage retention included:
- Introducing 'golden hellos' or 'golden handcuffs' to encourage those on NQT induction to remain in the profession after qualification, or some form of loan 'forgiveness' based on teaching for a certain number of years after qualification, such as paying off an individual's student debt over a ten-year period as long as they stayed in the profession;
 - Paying teachers more;
 - Raising the starting salary paid to qualified teachers.

Online survey results: factors that would improve experience as a teacher

- 6.150 In the survey respondents were asked what would improve (or would have improved) their experience as a teacher. They were presented with a list of possible improvements and asked which three were the most important to them.
- 6.151 Just over one in five overall (22 per cent) selected 'better pay and conditions' as their top improvement. 'Reduced teaching workload', 'less stress' and 'help with managing workload' were all selected as key improvements by at least one in ten respondents.
- 6.152 When all top three improvements are combined, 'Reduced teaching workload' and 'less stress' were important to the highest proportion of respondents overall (at 46 per cent and 44 per cent), with 'better pay and conditions' selected by 41 per cent and a 'reduction in the administrative aspects of your role' by 32 per cent. 'Help with managing workload', 'more time for planning' and 'improved resources' also featured highly in the list of desired improvements, being chosen by at least one in five respondents. Several of the factors above could be regarded as relating to workload overall.

Figure 4: What would improve / would have improved your experience as a teacher? - prompted (Percentage giving each response)



Base: All (1,945)

- 6.153 Younger qualified teachers taking part (aged 34 and under) were more likely to want to see a ‘reduced teaching workload’, ‘better pay and conditions’ and ‘more time for planning’ than their older counterparts. Those respondents in the 35-54 age group were most likely to mention ‘less stress’ and ‘help with managing workload’. Mentions of a ‘reduction in the administrative aspects of your role’ and ‘help with managing children’s behaviour in the classroom’ were highest among respondents aged 55 and over.
- 6.154 Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers who responded were most likely to want to see a reduction in the administrative aspects of their role (chosen by 47 per cent of this group compared with 32 per cent overall), help with managing their workload (37 per cent compared with 25 per cent overall) and ‘less stress’ (51 per cent compared with 44 per cent overall). Conversely, Heads of Department / Heads of Year and Classroom Teachers were more likely to call for ‘reduced teaching workload’, ‘better pay and conditions’ and ‘more time for planning’.

7. Conclusions

Factors that encourage individuals to pursue a teaching career in Wales and encourage them to remain in the profession

Overarching messages

- 7.1 It is clear from the research that individuals are motivated to become and remain teachers primarily due to a sense of teaching as a vocation. This relates to the opportunities it brings to have a positive impact on the lives of children and young people – making a difference. These reasons for entering teaching were identified by serving teachers, young people considering teaching as a career and ITE students including those who had moved from other careers: the job satisfaction associated with teaching versus other roles had been an important draw to the profession as well. Some participants stated that they had been prompted to enter the profession because of the influence of an inspiring teacher.
- 7.2 The research found differences in perceptions among pupils and undergraduates about teaching in the primary and secondary sectors. Some referred to the nurturing element of the role in primary school, for example having enjoyed their own experience of primary school, as well as perceptions that behaviour management would probably be easier. When considering the attractiveness of the secondary sector, factors included passion for a subject, the intellectual stimulation of teaching older learners, and possible further career development.
- 7.3 Effective and consistent professional support during ITE, NQT induction, early career teaching and for more experienced qualified teachers is an essential component for retention.

Opportunities to promote knowledge and skills

- 7.4 Some saw teaching as an opportunity to fulfil and share a passion for a subject (highlighted mainly by secondary school teachers and those pursuing secondary ITE courses).

- 7.5 Teaching also offered Welsh speakers the opportunity to promote the Welsh language as part of their daily work.

Opportunities for creative professionalism

- 7.6 The expectation of a degree of autonomy over the working day was a theme in the literature review and emerged on occasion as an attractive factor among ITE students and young people with an interest in teaching.

A structured career

- 7.7 The potential for job security and career progression within teaching, alongside factors such as holiday entitlements, were also contributing to the attractions of teaching and to retention. However, they were much less important than working with learners and enabling them to fulfil their potential, as reflected in the literature review. Supply teachers and those on fixed term contracts were much less likely to identify job security as a factor that kept them teaching. 'Teaching and seeing learners progress' and 'making a difference' were their key factors.
- 7.8 While there was a need to promote the attractions of school leadership, it was sometimes recognised that not all teachers want to be Heads or Deputy Heads. The potential for teachers to progress to other forms of school leadership (e.g. leading on a curriculum area, supporting learners with specific needs) was not a key factor that currently contributed to participants' motivation to teach.

Factors that discourage individuals from considering pursuing a teaching career in Wales and contribute to them leaving the profession

Overarching messages

- 7.9 Some young people were deterred from the idea of becoming primary teachers by perceptions such as bureaucracy (for example health and safety), dealing with parents, the lack of opportunities to engage with a particular subject, the level of intellectual stimulus they would have in secondary rather than primary schools, and the emotional/physical demands of a primary school teacher's role. Factors putting

young people off becoming secondary school teachers included the challenges of managing teenagers and perceptions of stress, for example accountability with exam results and how it would feel to have pupils fail an important assessment. These examples were in addition to the broader concern with workload as a deterrent to pursuing a career in teaching.

- 7.10 There were concerns with the image of teaching. Some young people believed that they could access higher salaries with less stress and workload by pursuing other careers.
- 7.11 Negative perceptions of teaching (e.g. with workload) encountered via a range of sources were thought to discourage people from becoming teachers.

Tackling workload issues

- 7.12 Teachers' workload and stress were major factors that were off-putting for potential entrants, early career teachers and some teachers who are considering leaving the profession. This was evident across all strands of the research. Specific examples of challenges included the pressures of preparing lesson plans and evaluating lessons (mentioned among NQTs and ITE students). Experienced practitioners also referred to 'relentless pressure' and activities that were 'unduly time-consuming'. They emphasised the need to reduce the amount of collection and to maximise the use of this data. They also suggested a review of school systems to minimise the number of targets they were required to respond to; and to reduce bureaucracy. Participants (including early career teachers and more experienced colleagues) stressed the need for more time to reflect on practice and develop the strategies to enable them to balance the demands of the role.

The need for more support

- 7.13 The research identified the importance of supporting teachers and developing a culture in which they feel able to admit to struggling including around mental health and wellbeing, underpinned by visible support channels.

- 7.14 Some qualified teachers mentioned a lack of support from school leaders as a reason for leaving teaching, highlighting the importance of a supportive culture.
- 7.15 It should also be borne in mind that an individual's reasons for leaving teaching can be complex: the research suggests several factors can combine to lead a teacher to move on, including issues at a local level with leadership.

Other key issues highlighted in the research

Remuneration and financial incentives

- 7.16 Overall, qualified teachers and ITE students did not identify pay as the key motivation to want to teach. Even so, an adequate salary was felt to be important among young people and serving teachers. Furthermore, the level of remuneration and perceived job security for those in stable posts were factors that contributed to remaining in the profession. However, some participants did not think remuneration reflected the volume of teachers' work.
- 7.17 Financial incentives to enter teaching were a helpful bonus for some, but there is potential for this to be regarded as unfair. For example, incentives that depended on the degree attained by a student were sometimes queried on the grounds that degree attainment was not necessarily a sign of a good teacher.
- 7.18 Incentives in England were perceived as more visible than those in Wales. Also, it was not always clear to participants that the incentives were aimed at attracting applicants to teach in England.
- 7.19 There were cases where young people were attracted to teach in England because of the incentive difference with Wales. This raises the question of how prevalent this intention is and how likely it is that those who move to England intend to do so for a fixed period (with a longer-term intention to return to Wales).

Recruiting to ITE

- 7.20 ITE providers emphasised the positive difference teaching can make and how rewarding it could be. They sought candidates who demonstrated a sense of commitment to teaching as a career, and looked favourably on applicants who had

shown a previous commitment (e.g. through relevant work experience, see below). However, a candidate's suitability and calibre might not become apparent until the first teaching placement.

- 7.21 The research identified the importance of forging and maintaining links with potential teachers and targeting young people earlier in schools. This should include establishing closer links with careers advisers and keeping in touch with people who had expressed an interest in teaching to maintain their interest as they pursued their degree courses.
- 7.22 The research and literature review found that some people may become interested in pursuing a career in teaching at different stages of their lives. This emphasises the need to ensure that opportunities are available and supported for people to enter teaching at these different stages.
- 7.23 The research indicated the practical importance of ensuring that accurate and up-to-date information is made available to potential teachers. This should also be clear about matters such as equivalency tests for GCSE qualifications.

Marketing strategies

- 7.24 The need for more targeted recruitment campaigns was highlighted on occasion among ITE Centres and stakeholders. There are opportunities to develop further understanding of which groups should be targeted and how best to refine the key messages. Targeting those looking for a career change would extend the pool of potential teachers.
- 7.25 In addition, young people identified social media as a key channel for reaching them with information about teaching as a career. It is therefore important to ensure that social media is fully integrated into future marketing and advertising strategies.
- 7.26 Young people were aware of marketing campaigns, including those from ITE providers from England, which emphasised the incentives in England. There was less awareness of recruitment campaigns for Wales. As result, there did not appear to be in Wales a clear, consistent and prominent message on the benefits of choosing to teach.

7.27 Some participants referred to the negative role the media can play when reporting on teaching, including how issues that might arise in England could leak into the Wales narrative. The extent to which there is an issue with the image and regard for the profession needs to be assessed.

Preparing for ITE

7.28 Some current teachers and ITE students sought as much experience as possible. This included volunteering in school and working as Teaching Assistants before starting ITE courses. Others had developed an interest in teaching having spent time working with young people, including through youth and community work. This highlighted the value of opportunities for potential teachers to have worked as much as possible with children and young people before making their decision to train as teachers.

Early career issues

7.29 The importance of the quality and consistency of mentoring for all practitioners in the early years of their careers is a key message. In particular:

- The need for mentors to have the required training and to be given time to devote to the role;
- Mentors needed the personal attributes which meant they were approachable and supportive;
- Ensuring that mentors provided high-quality feedback as part of their support.

7.30 It was suggested that early career teachers could develop the role of supporting those at NQT induction alongside more experienced colleagues. Such arrangements needed to be in the context of a culture of support for all teachers in a school.

7.31 Providing this support was important in order to retain teachers in the early years of their careers.

- 7.32 Some ITE staff felt that a minority of trainee teachers would have benefitted from a longer PGCE.

Use of fixed term contracts

- 7.33 The impact of turnover of staff in schools and of fixed term contracts could not be explored in depth because of the absence of a dedicated sample of headteachers.

Overarching conclusions

- 7.34 To conclude, the research suggests a need for a holistic approach to dealing with teacher retention that includes taking steps to support teachers and addressing stress and workload. These issues also affect teacher recruitment. Matters relating to effective careers advice and guidance, improving communication campaigns and highlighting positive messages about the role, were also evident in discussions about the attractiveness of teaching as a career.

8. Research implications

- 8.1 Described below are key policy implications arising from the analysis of the research. They have been grouped as implications for Welsh Government, ITE providers, Local Authorities / Regional Education Consortia and schools although there is some overlap.

Key themes for policy

- 8.2 Teaching is a recognised, respected profession that is crucial to the future of Wales. This is a key message and should be integral to all strategies and clearly communicated by the Welsh Government and its partners.
- 8.3 Teaching is an exciting opportunity to make a positive difference to the life chances of children and young people. The new curriculum arrangements mean that teachers in Wales have opportunities to be creative and innovative in shaping what is learned and in responding to learners' individual needs. This presents an opportunity to promote teaching as an exciting and fulfilling opportunity in which professionals will enjoy considerable autonomy to fulfil their professional roles.
- 8.4 In relation to data collection, the evidence suggests that there is a need for schools, Regional Consortia, Estyn, and the Welsh Government to be clear about what needs to be collected (with the aim being to minimise data collection and maximise the use of existing data) and to be clear about what data is required for formative and accountability purposes. The findings from this research need to be considered in light of current discussions about future accountability and inspection arrangements.

Implications for Welsh Government

Use of incentives

- 8.5 The implications of incentives in both Wales and England to attract potential entrants, especially where there are shortages of teachers, need to be acknowledged and understood. This needs to be on the basis of quantitative

evidence of trends and qualitative evidence about individuals' choices and the impact of financial incentives on their decisions.

Routes into teaching

- 8.6 The research indicated potential benefits in creating flexible routes into teaching to enable people to train to enter teaching at different points. Further work is required to maximise the role of those support staff (including TAs, LSAs and cover supervisors) who have the potential to become teachers. This could be in the form of:
- a) a marketing campaign targeted at support staff with the potential to be great teachers to encourage them to consider undertaking ITE to develop their careers;
 - b) the creation of bespoke routes into ITE for those with over four years' experience of working as teaching support staff who meet set standards for entry.
- 8.7 Those contemplating teaching benefit from having gained experience as support staff prior to starting a course leading to QTS. It would be undesirable (and indeed counterproductive) to make previous experience as support staff a requirement for entry onto a course leading to QTS. However, there is a need to consider how to strengthen the opportunities for those considering ITE to gain potentially valuable classroom experience as support staff.

Recruitment strategies

- 8.8 The research suggests the need for a strategic approach to recruiting teachers, where responsibility for promoting teaching as a career, and using an evidence-based approach to ITE recruitment targets, is led by one organisation in partnership with other key stakeholders (such as ITE providers). It would be beneficial for the lead organisation to promote awareness of teaching as a profession through targeted marketing and high-quality and timely careers advice and guidance, by working closely with CEAG providers, ITE providers, schools, HEIs and other partners.
- 8.9 The evidence on the impact and effectiveness of current recruitment strategies, in particular the current Discover Teaching campaign, is not robust at present. This

suggests a need to consider establishing a clear audit of existing practice and the impact of current recruitment strategies.

Implications for ITE providers

- 8.10 ITE providers should ensure that accurate and up-to-date information is provided to potential applicants on entry requirements and equivalency tests.
- 8.11 In light of evidence from outside Wales about the length of induction periods, there may be a need to evaluate the effectiveness of the arrangements for formal induction of NQTs. The support needs of schools where NQTs are employed and the level of input that should be expected from ITE providers should also be considered.as part of the work of embedding reforms to ITE provision in Wales.
- 8.12 ITE providers and Estyn will continue to monitor the quality of mentoring of ITE students. The Welsh Government should consider using this evidence to determine whether further development work is required and to identify good practice to support the sector.

Implications for Local Authorities / Regional Education Consortia

Support for teachers

- 8.13 Existing support channels for teachers may need to be promoted more effectively. Local Authorities should ensure that the available support is accessible and that practitioners are aware of the help they could access and that they are encouraged to seek help when necessary. This should be as part of a culture which emphasises that it is acceptable to ask for support.

Implications for schools

Workload issues

- 8.14 There is concern about the workload of senior and middle leaders as an issue affecting retention and recruitment to those roles. This implies a need to make it easier for individuals to contribute as school leaders, possibly through more flexible working arrangements (such as part-time working).

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Annex A – Primary research sample detail

Qualitative sample

- i. The research with **teachers and school pupils** took the form of school visits. The sample was evenly divided across the Regional Education Consortia with visits to eight primary and eight secondary schools in total. Although there are many more primary than secondary schools, the aim of this qualitative sample was not to reflect these proportions. The aim instead was to ensure Beaufort visited a sufficient number of schools so that emerging themes could be identified for secondary as well as primary schools.
- ii. At each primary school, research was carried out with a mix of teachers. At each secondary school, the research included ‘A’ Level pupils and a mix of teachers. The table below summarises the overall sample composition for schools.

Table A1: Number of schools visited for the qualitative research

Regional Education Consortia	Primary schools (teachers)	Secondary schools (teachers and ‘A’ Level pupils)
Central South Consortium		2
Joint Education Service		2
South East Wales Education Achievement Service		2
ERW		2
GwE		2
Total		8

- iii. In selecting **schools** to approach for the research, Beaufort drew up a shortlist of potential schools within each Regional Education Consortia. This took into account the need to include: a mix of urban and more rural locations; Welsh language; pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds; and a mix of more and less deprived areas. This latter criterion was assessed using a combination of the

proportion of pupils receiving free school meals and the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation¹⁹.

- iv. Welsh Government then checked that the shortlist did not overlap with other research that was taking place in schools. Beaufort approached schools on the list, explaining the purpose of the study and the desired sample composition. Schools that wished to take part then organised participants for the Beaufort visit, aiming as far as possible for a mix among teachers of seniority, length of time qualified as a teacher and subjects taught. The aim with pupils was to have a mix of subjects studied and levels of interest in teaching as a career.
- v. The research visits required a good deal of flexibility to fit around the school day and minimise disruption to the school. The time available with participants varied from 45 minutes to 1.5 hours.
- vi. In total, 99 teachers took part across the 16 schools and 55 'A' Level pupils took part across the eight secondary schools. Nine of the pupils were from BME backgrounds. Six schools that assisted with the research were based in more deprived communities.
- vii. Six participants were at NQT induction and nine had completed induction the year before. These figures include two of the participants who were about to leave or had left the profession.
- viii. Beaufort also visited Wales' **three ITE Centres** (which existed at the time the research was carried out) with research taking place at Bangor University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and University of Wales Trinity St David. As with schools, Beaufort approached the Centres which then organised a group of staff and, separately, students for the research on the day of Beaufort's visit. Job titles among ITE staff included programme / course directors, PGCE team members, ITE director and lecturer. Five of the staff were Welsh speakers. The overall students' sample contained a mix of individuals training to be primary and secondary teachers. Eight students were studying to teach through the medium of Welsh and one student intended to teach Welsh in an English-medium school. In total, 14 staff and 24 ITE students took part.

¹⁹ [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2014](#)

- ix. Beaufort liaised with three universities to set up the **three focus groups with undergraduates** who were not studying to be ITE students. The groups took place at Aberystwyth University, Cardiff University, the University of South Wales, with 18 participants in total. They included a mix of those who were considering or might consider teaching as a career as well as those who had not considered it as an option.
- x. The **20 teachers who had left or were seriously considering leaving** were sourced via two means. The first route for finding these participants was via an online survey among teachers. As well as covering attractiveness and retention themes, the survey included a re-contact question for those who had left or were considering leaving teaching. Beaufort then followed up with a selection of participants who had agreed to be re-contacted for an in-depth interview. They were given a voucher as an incentive for taking part. The conversation explored in more depth the circumstances that led to their decision to leave or that were causing them to consider leaving.
- xi. The second route for sourcing leavers was via teachers who participated in the research during school visits. Beaufort researchers left their contact details with the school and a number of individuals subsequently contacted Beaufort to express an interest in taking part. They were either teachers who had taken part in the research or individuals who had been alerted to the research by teachers Beaufort had spoken with.
- xii. In total, 17 of the 20 participants had left the profession and three were seriously considering leaving. 13 had left within the last two years and four had left three to five years ago. 13 were qualified as secondary school teachers and seven were qualified as primary school teachers. Five had qualified as teachers in the last five years. Four had taught or were teaching through the medium of Welsh and one had taught at a bilingual school.
- xiii. The final part of the qualitative sample consisted of **24 stakeholders**. They were identified in consultation with Welsh Government and NFER and included an independent regulator in education, a senior union representative, Local Authority staff in HR roles, members of a Regional Education Consortia including a challenge advisor (who challenges and supports school leadership teams to improve

performance), school governors, teacher staffing / recruitment related organisations and Welsh Government staff.

Online survey sample

- xiv. The tables below give profile data for the online survey sample with comparative data from the Welsh Government's StatsWales data repository and the EWC Register of Practitioners (expressed as percentages).

Table A2: Profile of qualified teachers by phase

%	StatsWales (2017-18 data)	Online survey sample
Primary	51	42
Secondary	43	51
Other	6	6
Total	100	100

Table A3: Profile of qualified teachers by full-time / part-time working

%	StatsWales (2017-18 data)	Online survey sample
Full-time	80	80
Part-time	20	17
Other	n/a	3
Total	100	100

Table A4: Profile of qualified teachers by post

%	StatsWales (2017-18 data)	Online survey sample
Head Teacher / Acting HT / Deputy HT / Assistant HT	14	14
Teacher	86	58
Head of Department / Head of Year	n/a	25
Other	n/a	3
Total	100	100

Table A5: Profile of qualified teachers by gender

%	StatsWales (2017-18 data)	Online survey sample
Male	25	30
Female	75	68
Prefer not to say	n/a	2
Total	100	100

Table A6: Profile of qualified teachers by age

%	EWC Register (National Education Workforce Survey Research Report April 2017)	Online survey sample
Under 25	4	3
25-34	28	22
35-44	32	33
45-54	24	31
55-64	12	9
65+	1	1
Prefer not to say	-	1
Total	100	100

Table A7: Profile of qualified teachers by years since qualifying

%	EWC Register (National Education Workforce Survey Research Report April 2017)	Online survey sample
0-5 years	18	14
6-10 years	17	16
11-20 years	35	37
21+ years	30	33
Total	100	100