



Review of Teacher Employment in Scotland

**ATL's response to the call
for evidence**

21 April 2011

ATL – the education union

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL), as a leading education union, recognise the link between education policy and our members' conditions of employment. Our evidence-based policy making enables us to campaign and negotiate from a position of strength. We champion good practice and achieve better working lives for our members. We help our members, as their careers develop, through first-rate research, advice, information and legal support. Our 160,000 members – teachers, lecturers, headteachers, support staff and students – are empowered to get active locally and nationally.

ATL is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) and Education International (EI). ATL is not affiliated to any political party and seeks to work constructively with all the main political parties.

Introduction

ATL welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the call for evidence to the Review of Teacher Employment in Scotland. We believe that this review comes at a critical juncture for the education sector in Scotland. The choices we make now will have long lasting consequences as to whether or not the vision for excellent teaching and learning in Scotland's schools within the report *Teaching Scotland's Future* will be achieved. What we cannot afford to happen is for the positive momentum already gained since the publication of the report into the Review of Teacher Education to be stalled by the recommendations of this review.

A. Professionalism

The Teachers' Agreement, which aimed to enhance the opportunities for professional development, made continuing professional development (CPD) a condition of service while also specifying that teachers should undertake a maximum of 35 hours CPD in each working year. It also required that all probationers should be guaranteed a one-year training contract.

1) To what extent do you agree that the arrangements for professional development set out in the Teachers' Agreement have: (Please select one option on each row)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
a) Led to an improved quality of learning and teaching?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Acted to develop leadership capacity within all levels of the teaching profession	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2a) Should the current arrangements for continuing professional development be changed?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

2b) If so, how?

ATL welcomes the priority placed upon CPD within *Teaching Scotland's Future*; the report into the Review of Teacher education led by Graham Donaldson. We believe that the current arrangements for CPD are still too patchy across the country. Teachers should have clearer expectations of the professional dialogue that should occur when undertaking the *Professional Review and Development* discussions.

We fully understand the difficult financial climate that the Scottish Government is operating within. We do not believe, however, that the recommendations contained with the Donaldson Report can be delivered within the current budget as expressed by the Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning when giving the Scottish Government's formal response to the report to the Parliament in March. Efficiency savings alone will not meet the requirements of even just the report's recommendations in relation to CPD. We recognise the value in *Glowmeets* but retain the belief that they cannot replace the need for physical meetings on a purely economic basis.

B. Teachers' Duties

Annex B of the Teachers' Agreement outlines duties for classroom/chartered, principal, depute head teacher and head teachers, as a guide for the development of specific job descriptions in local authorities.

3) Do you think the prescribed set of duties in Annex B of the Teachers' Agreement are suitable for a profession implementing Curriculum for Excellence?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

4a) Do you believe the duties need to be revised?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

b) If so, how?

At their heart the duties set out in Annex B of the Teachers Agreement are clear and simple expressions of the routine duties undertaken by teachers. ATL is committed to teachers achieving greater levels of autonomy and trust in their professional judgement. We would have reservations about changes to the duties which could then hidebound teachers from the creativity and innovation we're seeking in the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence.

C. Career Structure

The Teachers' Agreement created a simplified career structure that included four main grades within both primary and secondary schools:

- i) Classroom teacher (probationer, main grade, chartered)*
- ii) Principal teacher*
- iii) Depute head teacher*
- iv) Head teacher*

5) To what extent do you agree that this career structure has met its aims: (Please select one option on each row)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
a) to provide opportunities for teachers to advance their careers in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) to provide opportunities for teachers to advance their careers through promotion to management roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) to provide an appropriate number of skilled individuals able to undertake management roles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6) To what extent do you agree that the probationary year is a crucial stage in teacher's development?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	neither agree nor disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	strongly disagree

7a) Do you think that the career structure should be changed?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

7b) If so, how?

It is clear that the progression from Depute to Headship is not as an attractive a proposition as it once was for the profession. We believe that this requires serious consideration by the review group. The demands placed on heads appear to be an obstacle to progression for many deputes. Anecdotal evidence from members, crudely put, tells us that the financial rewards are not compelling enough for the stresses and strains involved in being a modern headteacher.

We have also received worrying feedback about the level of work falling to Principal Teachers in order to meet the demands of Curriculum for Excellence.

We believe further research is required to ensure we get the correct career structure that meets the needs of the profession and will assist in delivering the excellent learning and teaching in our classrooms.

D. Conditions of Service / Pay

The Teachers' Agreement specified:

- a contractual 35 hour week for all teachers
- a maximum class contact time of 22.5 hours
- an allowance of personal time for preparation and correction, of no less than one third of class contact time
- that tasks which do not require the teacher to be on the school premises can be carried out at a time and place of the teacher's choosing
- use of remaining collegiate time to undertake activities agreed at school level
- 195 days working year, and an additional maximum of 35 hours CPD for all teachers

The Teachers' Agreement also introduced substantial pay rises for all teachers.

Conditions of Service

8) To what extent do you agree that the conditions of service listed above: (Please select one option on each row)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
a) Enable teachers to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Need adjusted to reflect actual workloads and practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Help to nurture an attitude of professionalism amongst teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Are suitable to successfully implement Curriculum for Excellence?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9a) Do you think the current conditions of service should be amended?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

b) If yes, please specify how:

The 2004 HMIe interim report on 'implementation of A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century' stated that "staff generally viewed the 35-hour agreement as a longer-term protection from the delegation of additional tasks or high levels of new developments". Seven years on from the HMIe document teachers still do not expect to work a maximum of 35 hours per week. The demands of the job are such that marking and preparation are constant elements of teachers' evenings and weekends.

Interestingly, feedback from members in England demonstrated an unwillingness to be constrained to a 35-hour working week, feeling that it impinged on their professionalism. Whilst we would respect members' beliefs, we believe there should be a reduction in the administrative demands placed on teachers. This would assist in freeing up time to focus on teaching and learning in the classroom.

Pay

10) To what extent do you agree that the current level of teachers' pay reflects their status as professionals working in the public sector?

<input type="checkbox"/>	strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	neither agree nor disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	strongly disagree

11a) The Teachers' Agreement resulted in the posts of Principal Teacher, Depute Head Teacher and Head Teacher being job sized. Do you believe job sizing arrangements need to be revised?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

b) If so, how?

In line with our earlier comments in question 7(b) we believe that the job sizing arrangements for Depute Head and Head Teacher need to be revised to provide more attractive financial incentives for these posts.

E. Chartered Teachers

The Teachers Agreement created the position of Chartered Teacher within Scottish schools as a means of allowing experienced teachers to develop without having to leave the classroom.

12) To what extent do you agree that the Chartered Teacher Scheme has had a positive impact on: (Please select one option on each row)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
a) Retaining skilled professionals as classroom teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Learning and teaching quality across the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13a) Should the Chartered Teacher Scheme be:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Retained as it is
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amended
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disbanded

13b) Please give reasons for your choice:

We would like to see clearer guidance on what is expected of a Chartered Teacher in relation to learning and teaching in their school or across their local authority. We believe the scheme needs to be more accessible. The low level of take up of the scheme begs the question as to why it is not an attractive option when it should be for teachers.

We don't believe that the agreement reached between the Scottish Government and CoSLA to freeze salary increments for Chartered Teachers is in best interest of the profession.

F. Other Staff in Schools

The Teachers' Agreement created additional posts for support staff (e.g. classroom assistants, clerical staff, lab technicians) undertaking a range of tasks in Scotland's schools. Support staff were introduced to help address teacher workload while allowing teachers to focus on their key role in teaching and learning. Annex E to the Teachers' Agreement established a list of tasks that should not routinely be carried out by teachers.

14) To what extent do you agree that additional support staff have: (please select one option for each row)

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
a) Helped teachers to focus on their core role as leaders of education in the classroom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Helped school managers to focus on leading, managing and providing strategic direction for schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Impacted positively on the learning of pupils?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15a) Do you think it is necessary to revise the tasks that the Teachers' Agreement (Annex E) specifies should NOT routinely be carried out by teachers?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

15b) If so, how?

The tasks contained within Annex E should be revised via the SNCT to reflect the communication/technological advances since the Agreement was originally formed in 2001. The now standard use of email, organisational intranets/portals and the internet has significantly changed the way we work in the last decade.

We do not believe however that the spirit of the Annex needs revised to allow for a greater range of administrative and other non-teaching tasks to be carried out by teachers. Feedback from members continually highlights the administrative burden they are increasingly under.

G. Negotiating Machinery

The Teachers' Agreement established the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) as the tripartite body (Teacher Unions, COSLA, Scottish Government) responsible for negotiations on pay and conditions, and for establishing an appeals mechanism. It also established Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers (LNCTs) which have powers to vary certain devolved condition of service agreements and to reach agreement on a range of matters not subject to national bargaining. The roles of the SNCT and the LNCTs are set out in Annex F of the Teachers' Agreement.

16) How well has the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers undertaken its role?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Very well
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Well
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 Satisfactorily
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 Poorly
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Very poorly

17) How well have the Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers undertaken their role?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Very well
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Well
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 Satisfactorily
<input type="checkbox"/>	4 Poorly
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Very poorly

18a) Do you think the negotiating arrangements should be changed?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

b) If so, how?

We believe that, from the perspective of looking from the outside of the negotiating machinery, one cannot dispute the successful nature of the SNCT in ensuring until recently the threat of industrial action on a national scale is avoided. One administrative area we would like to see improved is the publishing of agreed LNCT policies on the website as per the Teachers' Agreement. We have found through representing and supporting members in individual items of casework examples where the agreed LNCT policies are not being followed by the relevant authority. We would like to see the opportunity for ensuring greater compliance with the agreed policies.

When the SNCT was set up, ATL membership was almost exclusively in the independent sector. We have since established our first office and staff in Scotland, grown our membership from this low base by more than 40%, with almost half now working on SNCT terms in the state sector, predominantly as probationers. As our membership has grown we have contributed positively to the wider education policy debate. We believe it is now time to consider how ATL's voice could be heard within SNCT, so that we can play a full part in the future journey of Scottish education.

H. Overall impact of the Teachers' Agreement

The Review would like to consider the overall impact of the Teachers' Agreement.

**19) To what extent do you agree that the Teachers' Agreement:
(Please select one option on each row)**

	strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
a) Attracts the most skilled individuals to the profession	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Retains the most skilled individuals within the profession	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Recognises and encourages excellence in the classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Contributes to the creation of a flexible, creative, learner-centred teaching profession that can support Curriculum for Excellence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I. Further Points

20) The Review Group would be pleased to consider any further points respondents wish to make about teacher employment in Scotland. (Please expand the box below if you need more space).

It is perhaps more of a philosophical point but the Teachers Agreement was a set of structural changes and mechanisms arising from the negotiations following the official report from the independent inquiry. In of itself the Teachers Agreement did not explicitly set out objectives as outlined in question 19 and elsewhere in this document. There appears to be an acceptance that the Agreement had these objectives because they were discussed by the implementation group. In the report from this review we would like to see a clear expression of the rational for any proposed changes and their impact on the Scottish Government's vision for the future of Scottish education against which future developments can be reviewed and measured.

21) The Review Group may wish to contact you as part of the wider Review of Teacher Employment. Would you be willing for them to do this?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No