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### **Funding increases to teachers' pensions employer contributions**

UCAC welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department for Education's consultation on '*Funding increases to teachers' pensions employer contributions*'.

UCAC is a trade union which represents school teachers and leaders, tutors and lecturers in the further and higher education sector throughout Wales.

### **Question 1: Do you agree with the proposal to fund schools (as defined in 4.5) for these increased costs?**

UCAC agrees with the proposal that schools should be funded for the increased costs defined in the consultation document.

UCAC strongly asserts that Welsh Government should also receive appropriate funding to fund the increased employer contributions to teachers' pensions. The consultation document states that the document is '*about institutions in England only*' but it is important to remind ourselves that teachers' pensions is not an element of a teachers' conditions of service that has been devolved. To be clear: teachers' pensions are a reserved matter.

There is a danger here of the Department making the same mistake that it made in its announcement on 24 July 2018<sup>1</sup>, by failing to take into account the distribution of matters that are reserved in the field of education as opposed to those that are devolved, thereby neglecting to give consideration to schools and other educational institutions in Wales.

That decision was subsequently reversed by an announcement by the Secretary of State for Wales on 13 September<sup>2</sup>. In that statement, the Secretary of State emphasised "*the UK Government's commitment to the fair application of the rules underpinning the Welsh Government's funding*".

Given that the governance of teachers' pensions is not a devolved matter it is clearly the Treasury's responsibility to ensure that Welsh Government receives appropriate funding to fund the increased employer contributions to teachers' pensions. This is fundamental to ensuring that education institutions in Wales are treated in an equitable manner to education institutions in England.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-fund-pay-rise-for-teachers>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-announces-235m-to-fund-teachers-pay-increases-in-wales>

**Question 2: Do you agree with the proposal to fund FE colleges and other public-training organisations for these increased costs.**

UCAC agrees with the proposal that Further Education colleges and other public-training organisations should be funded for the increased costs defined in the consultation document.

Again, UCAC strongly asserts that Welsh Government should also receive appropriate funding to fund the increased employer contributions to teachers' pensions. We are also of the opinion that specific consideration should be given to sixth form colleges which are an integral element of the education system in Wales and which implements a national (all-Wales) pay structure which will also be impacted by the increases to teachers' pensions employer contributions.

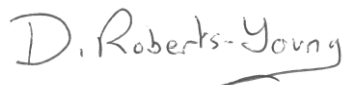
We also note that the consultation document proposes not to offer funding support to the post-1992 universities. The impact on this sector could be substantial and should be carefully taken into account. As with schools and FE institutions, UCAC maintains that any funding offered to institutions in England should also be offered to equivalent institutions in Wales.

**Question 3: Please provide any additional evidence relating to the impact on all sectors, which you think the Department should consider considering these proposals.**

Without doubt these are challenging times for the profession in terms of school funding and the combined pressures of overwhelming workload and stagnating teachers' salaries. Whilst the process of devolving pay and conditions has commenced and will be operational in the 2019-2020 academic year a teacher's pension entitlement will remain a non-devolved element.

It must be recognised that teachers' pensions is a highly important consideration for those who are attracted to the profession. In these challenging times government faces the challenge of attracting and retaining teachers and lecturers to the education workforce. Not securing the appropriate funding for the increased costs to teachers' pensions employer contributions would have an enormous impact on school budgets that would almost certainly lead to redundancies, heavier work load etc. which in turn would have an adverse effect on recruitment and retention.

Finally, but of the utmost importance, the document in its introduction states that the consultation is on the Department of Education's proposal '*to support certain education institutions with the increases to employer contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) in 2019-2020*'. We strongly emphasise the need for full funding to be in place for the period of the next *Comprehensive Spending Review* from September 2019 until March 2023.



Dilwyn Roberts-Young (General Secretary)