

ASCL Member Pay and Conditions Survey

February 2021

Overview

We are acutely aware of the pressures that our members, school and college leaders are finding themselves under, particularly since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. We recently surveyed our members in state-funded schools and colleges to gain more insight into this. The survey was sent out via email to 14,211 of our members.

The results of the survey will help to inform our work in these areas, and to provide statistical evidence to complement the anecdotal information we receive daily from our members.

Category of members surveyed: All school leaders in state-funded schools and colleges in England and Wales.

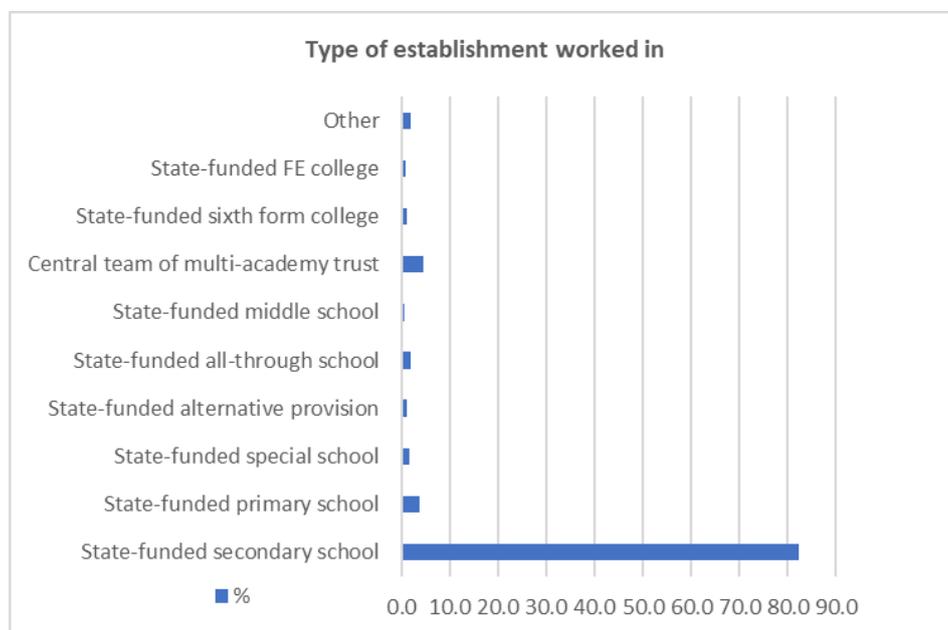
Number of members surveyed: 14,211

Number of respondents

Overall: 1,890 **England:** 1,828 **Wales:** 62

Response rate overall: 13%

The majority of respondents work in state-funded secondary or state-funded primary schools. The full breakdown can be seen below:



Survey Results

❖ 54.4% (1,028) of respondents are considering leaving their role;

- The 54.4% = 12.9% within the next year; 23.4% within the next 1-3 years; 18.1% within the next 3-5 years. The 54.4% = 21.9% would leave for another role *outside* education; 21.8% would take *early* retirement; 10.7% would take *normal* retirement.

This represents a significant loss to the profession.

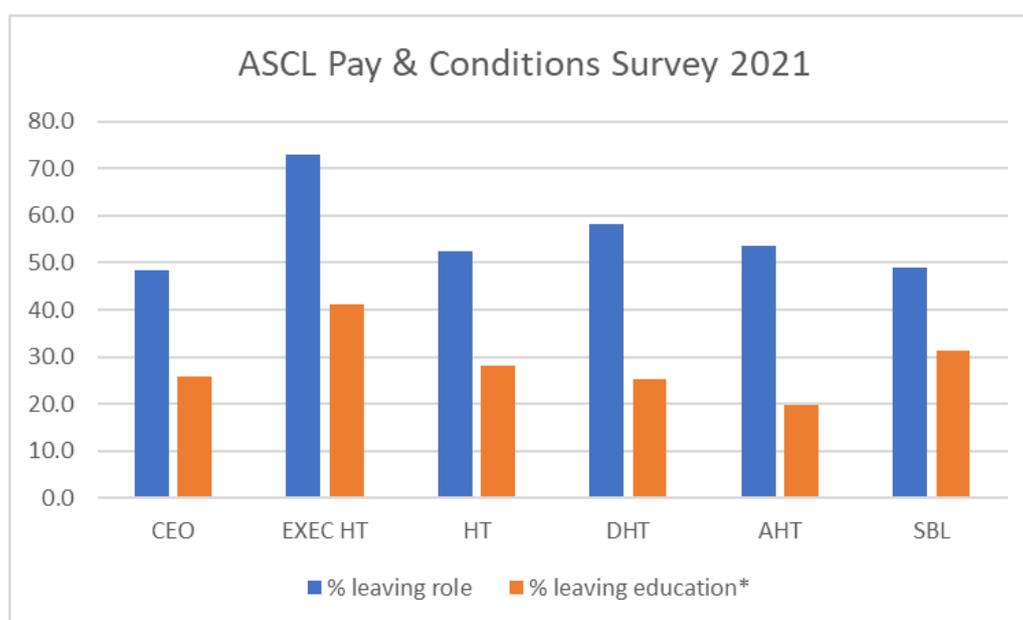
There are many recurring reasons why respondents are considering leaving, some good, but many bad, including:

- 20+, 30+, 40+ years in the profession/Headship
- Accountability measures
- Burnout
- Career progression
- Covid (Impact of)
- Disenchanted/disillusioned with government
- Exhaustion/fatigue
- 'Had enough'
- Increased responsibility
- Lack of work/life balance
- Lack of support/respect from government
- Lack of recognition of role/profession
- Pay
- Pressure from funding constraints
- Promotion
- Stress
- Unreasonable expectations
- Unsustainable workload/working hours
- Wellbeing

When looking at the data by role, it is quite alarming to see that the lowest proportion considering leaving their roles is 48.4%. This is for Chief Executive Officers (CEO). The highest is Executive Head at a staggering 73% and 41.3% planning to leave education altogether*.
(*leaving for a role outside education or early retirement)

Over 50% of Heads, Deputies and Assistant Heads are considering leaving their role, and 28% of Heads and 31.5% of School Business Leaders (SBL) are considering leaving education altogether*.

The graph below shows this in detail.



- ❖ **80.8%** of respondents **do not agree with the Chancellor's decision** to freeze public sector pay, 8.9% are unsure, and 9.6% do agree with the decision.
- ❖ **71.3%** of respondents **report working additional hours than pre-Covid-19**;
- ❖ The 71.3% = 16% 1-5 hours more, 28% 5-10 hours more, 15.7% 10-15 hours more, 11.4% 15+ hours more.
- ❖ **72.4%** of respondents **do not feel that they have an acceptable work/life balance**, 7.9% are unsure and 19.7% do feel that they have an acceptable work/life balance.
- ❖ **47.7%** of respondents **do not feel that their workload is manageable**; 16.8% are unsure, and 35.5% feel that their workload is manageable.

Conclusion

These results reflect many of the issues that our members have been telling us about, particularly since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

It was already widely acknowledged that our leaders faced more accountability and worked more hours than most other countries¹, but the impact of the pandemic has clearly worsened this.

We have been highlighting the issues of recruitment and retention across the profession. Leadership roles are impacted by this in both current recruitment to and retention in those roles, but also by the damage to the leadership supply pipe by recruitment and retention issues for both early career and experienced teachers.

It is clear that these recruitment and retention issues are mirrored in School Business Leader roles. We have seen the spotlight rightly shone on our School Business Leaders throughout the pandemic, working alongside Headteachers, advising senior leadership team colleagues and leading on many of the operational and health and safety issues related to the pandemic.

The additional pressures placed on school and college leaders as a result of the pandemic are ever-increasing and relentless, from the partial school closures at the start of the pandemic and the instant switch to remote learning, to wider reopening plans and the exams fiasco of summer 2020, covid risk assessments, free school meals voucher issues, coupled with track and trace, partial school closures and mass testing arrangements. Much of this work has required school and college leaders to work even more additional hours, in evenings, weekends and throughout all school holidays. We have serious concerns about the wellbeing and work/life balance of our members, the level and amount of work is not sustainable.

It is therefore staggering that the government is choosing to reward this hard work and additional pressure by implementing a public sector freeze which will result in all school and college leaders experiencing yet another real-terms pay cut. It is not surprising that our members overwhelmingly disagree with this decision.

Urgent action is required by the government, to ensure that the school and college leaders currently in role feel supported, valued and recognised for the incredible work that they do, so that we can retain them in the profession and so that they are incentivised and motivated to progress through leadership roles and into Headship.

Furthermore, our School Business Leaders must be given the recognition, remuneration and status that is deserved, and take their place at the SLT table with other senior leaders.

¹ The Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), 2018

Overall Results

ASCL Pay & Conditions Survey February 2021	No of Respondents	Any additional hours post-Covid (weekly)					Workload manageable			Acceptable work/life balance		
		None	1-5	5-10	10-15	15+	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Overall	1,890	29%	16%	28%	16%	11%	36%	48%	17%	20%	72%	8%
England	1,828	29%	16%	28%	16%	11%	35%	47%	17%	20%	72%	8%
Wales	62	19%	15%	32%	15%	19%	18%	52%	31%	11%	76%	13%
SBLs	213	28%	23%	27%	12%	10%	37%	47%	16%	30%	61%	9%

ASCL Pay & Conditions Survey February 2021	No of Respondents	Considering leaving role				If yes, what will next role be				Agree with pay freeze		
		No	Yes, within 1 year	Yes, within 1-3 years	Yes, within 3-5 years	In education	Normal retirement	Early retirement	Outside education	Yes	No	Unsure/ no opinion
Overall	1,890	46%	13%	23%	18%	49%	11%	22%	14%	10%	81%	9%
England	1,828	46%	13%	23%	18%	18%	39%	30%	9%	10%	81%	10%
Wales	62	45%	3%	32%	19%	29%	29%	29%	1%	8%	82%	10%
SBLs	213	51%	12%	17%	20%	22%	29%	32%	16%	16%	71%	12%

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