

Almost half of new teachers consider leaving within 10 years, according to new study

April 1 2019



Empty hallway of a school. Credit: pixabay

Workload and a better work/life balance are the main reasons teachers leave or consider leaving the profession within ten years, a new survey of 1,200 teachers, published in the *British Journal of Educational Studies*,

finds. The nature not the quantity of the workload, with its emphasis on accountability and performance, was the crucial factor in decisions to leave.

Between 40 and 50 per cent of the survey's respondents left or were considering leaving the profession within ten years of starting teacher training despite the majority of respondents (75%) viewing teaching as a long-term career. Those who want to teach are committed to the profession and yet, somehow, that commitment is eroded in a very short space of time.

Graduates from the UCL Institute of Education were asked what originally motivated them to teach, and the reasons why they left the profession or may consider leaving in future.

The main reasons for wanting to teach were to 'make a difference' (69%), to work with young people (64%), and love of subject (50%). However, once they started teaching, the reality of daily life as a [teacher](#) dulled their enthusiasm, the study found.

For those who had left, the reasons given were to improve work/life balance (75%), workload (71%), and target-driven culture (57%). Despite claiming to be aware of the challenges of workload before entering teaching, respondents found the reality of teaching worse than expected, with their work increasingly directed towards assessment, exams, progress measures and preparation for review and inspection, and away from the more individualistic and creative aspects of the job.

"It's not as if they weren't aware that teaching was going to be demanding. However, they feel that the demands of the job outstrip their capacity to adapt," the authors said. "This raises the questions: what can be done to arrest this trend?"

"The general response from government is that teaching will be improved by reducing workload, removing unnecessary tasks and increasing pay. This may help, and our study does continue the discourse that workload is key. However, it also indicates that part of the problem lies within the culture of [teaching](#), the constant scrutiny, the need to perform, and hyper-critical management. Reducing [workload](#) will not address these cultural issues."

More information: *British Journal of Educational Studies*, [DOI: 10.1080/00071005.2019.1589417](#)

Provided by Taylor & Francis

Citation: Almost half of new teachers consider leaving within 10 years, according to new study (2019, April 1) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-04-teachers-years.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.