

SCOTTISH TEACHER EMPLOYMENT SURVEY 2026

Scotland's teacher employment gap

**Evidence for Parliament
and the media**

A report on teachers' experiences
of finding secure work in Scotland.

572

RESPONSES ANALYSED

**Scottish Teacher
Employment Survey 2026**

Final findings
4 October 2026



THE REPORT AT A GLANCE

Main findings

572 survey responses through 4 October 2026. Selected findings, with their own question bases.

AUGUST SCHOOL RETURN / RESPONSES THROUGH 4 OCTOBER 2026

28.5%

127 of 445 respondents

**Five paid teaching days
or fewer, including none**

16.2%

72 of 445 respondents

**No paid teaching days at all
Included in the 127**

72 with no days + 55 with more than zero, up to five = 127. Wanted work or more hours; available for at least part of the period. Totals run from each local school return to the response date. Usable Q7 totals; p.9.

ACCESS TO SECURE WORK

12.8%

In permanent employment
at the time of response

73 / 572 | Q16 / p.8

32.7%

Longest wait for wanted
permanent work: 3+ years

187 / 572 | Q22 / p.13

74.4%

Booker jobs often / very often
gone before they could reply

131 / 176 users | Q15a / p.11

COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT / RECALLED EXPERIENCE IN ANY YEAR

55.2%

Post ended; same council
re-employed after a gap

257 / 466 | Q25 / p.14

51.4%

Reported that a break
reset qualifying service

132 / 257 | Q26b / p.14

19.7%

Reported contract ending
before census; rehired after

92 / 466 | Q27 / p.14

REPORTED IMPACTS SINCE AUGUST 2024 / Q28

69.4%

Mental health / wellbeing

397 / 572 | p.15

64.3%

Used savings for living costs

368 / 572 | p.15

54.4%

Delayed personal / family plans

311 / 572 | p.15

Wellbeing impact: **78.3% in the 2021–23 full-registration cohort** (144/184), the highest published cohort share; **65.3% among secondary respondents** (49/75). pp.16–17.

92.8%

334 / 360

Would likely stay / return with
a suitable permanent post (Q29)

89.5%

512 / 572

Prioritised not overlooking
previously qualified teachers (Q31)

Self-selected sample, not national prevalence. Groups overlap; periods and bases differ. Q29 is a conditional follow-up among 360 of the 572. Reported service resets are not independently verified council decisions. Full definitions accompany each finding.



THE REPORT AT A GLANCE / MORE FINDINGS

Further headline findings

Further findings from the same 572 responses. Subgroups and periods are shown beside each result.

82.8%

299 / 361

Doing supply because the permanent or fixed-term work wanted was unavailable

Q13 / supply seekers / since August 2026 / p.29

58.6%

335 / 572

Had considered leaving teaching because of difficulty obtaining the work wanted

Q28 / contributed since August 2024 / p.35

29.9%

171 / 572

Currently doing paid work outside teaching

Q17 / at response / p.31

79.5%

136 / 171

Outside work mainly or partly because they could not get enough teaching work, or the kind they wanted

Q17b / respondents doing outside work / p.31

10.1%

58 / 572

Claimed Universal Credit with lack of teaching work or hours as a reason

Q18 / since August 2026 / p.31

50.9%

291 / 572

Had seen no suitable permanent posts advertised in their main council and sector

Q19 / since August 2026 / p.32

TEACHER BOOKER / ALL 176 USERS' VIEWS

33.5%

Harder

59 / 176

20.5%

Easier

36 / 176

25.0%

No difference

44 / 176

21.0%

Unable to compare

37 / 176

Q15b, since August 2026; "easier" and "harder" combine much and somewhat (p.11). Rounded shares may not sum to 100%. Q19 uses all respondents, including those not looking or unable to recall; it measures posts seen, not a vacancy census.



READING THIS REPORT

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Findings, respondent accounts and questions for the Scottish Government.

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About this edition

Final edition, 4 October 2026. Covers all 572 responses; the survey closed on 4 October 2026. This open-link, self-selected survey describes respondents' experiences; it does not estimate prevalence across Scotland's teaching workforce.



OPENING / THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Stability: the commitments and the evidence

Government commitments on workforce stability, and what the survey shows

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT / 18 JANUARY 2026

“supporting workforce stability and ensuring that staffing levels continue to support high-quality teaching, learning and relationships in schools.”

Jenny Gilruth, then Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. [A1]

Stable relationships matter in schools. Teachers need time to know their pupils, understand what helps them learn and work with their families. Scotland’s education policy recognises this. Education Scotland describes relationships that should be reliable, predictable and consistent where possible. [A2]

A CONCERN ALREADY ON RECORD

The 2023 National Discussion on Education recorded concerns about teacher turnover and insecure contracts disrupting continuity of support. It also recorded calls for more permanent contracts. Those were the findings of an independent consultation report, not a new guarantee of employment. [A3]

WHAT THIS SURVEY ADDS

This report brings together 572 respondents’ experiences of finding work, obtaining security and paying for everyday life. It records teachers available for work who received none, repeated gaps in employment, and decisions about whether to stay in the profession.

The question for government and councils is how their stated commitment to stability reaches teachers still waiting for it. Headcounts alone cannot show whether a teacher has dependable hours, a route to a lasting post or an income they can plan around.

The survey does not measure pupils’ outcomes or establish that a particular contract harmed a child. It provides evidence about employment conditions that deserve scrutiny alongside the commitments above. Linked sources A1–A12 are listed on page 24.



OPENING / FROM COMMITMENTS TO DELIVERY

What delivery should mean

Permanent work, dependable income and a fair route into lasting employment.

01 Permanent funding should reach permanent jobs.

In 2021, recurring funding was announced to support permanent recruitment. In Parliament on 17 November 2022, Shirley-Anne Somerville said: “the funding is now permanent, so local authorities should be allowing contracts on a permanent basis.” [\[A4\]](#) [\[A5\]](#)

32.7%

187 of 572 reported a longest wait of at least three years for a permanent post they wanted. Q22; since probation, not necessarily a current wait.

02 Security must include access to paid work.

The Government’s Fair Work plan includes security of pay and contract. COSLA’s response on Fair Work points to salaries and pensions as sources of security. Those terms cannot provide a dependable income to a teacher who cannot obtain enough paid days. [\[A6\]](#) [\[A7\]](#)

14.7%

71 of 484 wanted work or more hours and were available for at least part of the period, but reported no paid teaching work since schools returned in August 2026. Q8.

03 Existing teachers need a clear route to stability.

The 2026 programme commits to a more stable workforce. The September announcement describes a three-year guarantee for newly qualified teachers, alongside additional registration for established primary teachers. Its delivery must address the position of teachers already waiting. [\[A10\]](#) [\[1\]](#)

89.5%

512 of 572 prioritised ensuring previously qualified teachers without secure work are not overlooked. Q31; a view on guarantee design, not final eligibility.

A COUNCIL RECORD / STfP’S FOI WORK

North Lanarkshire recorded **0 permanent, 25 fixed-term and 47 supply-list-only** destinations within the council for its 72 primary probationers completing in 2024–25, at September 2025. Its response says some may have found work elsewhere. A supply-list place does not show paid days worked. [\[A11\]](#)

Council policies provide another test. Aberdeen City’s 2021 agreement provides routes to permanent status; Falkirk’s published policy calls for contract monitoring and recognises that some gaps may preserve continuity. The reported resets in this survey warrant clear explanations against the rules that applied. [\[A8\]](#) [\[A9\]](#)

COSLA has also raised council finances and changing pupil rolls. Those pressures belong in the discussion, alongside evidence of what funding delivers. [\[A12\]](#) Local policies are cited as examples; national survey totals do not establish a breach by a named council. Sources: p.24; [\[1\]](#): p.23.

PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY

Questions for Parliament

Questions for ministers, with council evidence needed to answer them. The proposed guarantee must address teachers already qualified and still seeking secure work.

01 Who will the three-year guarantee include, and will it create additional jobs?

512 of 572 (89.5%) prioritised not overlooking previously qualified teachers. 396 of 572 (69.2%) prioritised protecting existing teachers' opportunities. Q31.

Will ministers publish the eligibility rules, start date and provision for teachers who qualified in earlier years, including those on temporary contracts or supply lists? Will posts and funding be additional, how will displacement of existing opportunities be tested, and what follows year three?

02 How will available teachers get access to paid days?

71 / 484 reported no paid teaching work; separately, 127 / 445 with usable totals reported five days or fewer. Wanted-and-available bases; since schools returned in August 2026. 131 of 176 (74.4%) Teacher Booker users said bookings were often gone before they could respond. Q5, Q7, Q8, Q15.

Will ministers and COSLA publish council-level evidence on paid days, available supply capacity and unmet cover needs, by sector and subject? Will councils publish their booking and allocation rules, and how will they distinguish a supply-list place from paid work?

03 How are qualifying-service decisions checked and explained?

257 / 466 recalled a gap before re-employment by the same council; 132 / 257 reported that a break reset qualifying service. Q25-Q26b.

Will each council publish its rules, give teachers a written service calculation with reasons for any reset, and provide a review route? Will ministers seek an audit of recurring gaps and transfer decisions?

04 What do annual staffing counts miss between contracts?

92 / 466 recalled a contract ending before a September census and re-employment by the same council afterwards. Any year; motive is not established. Q27.

Will ministers examine employment and paid days across the school year alongside census-day staffing, and can councils show which of these sequences reflect genuine changes in staffing need?

05 What support is there for qualified teachers who cannot get enough paid work?

368 of 572 used savings to cover ordinary living costs; 275 of 572 relied on family or friends; 207 of 572 had difficulty paying rent, mortgage, bills or other essential costs. Q28.

Will ministers assess the financial position of qualified teachers who are available for work but get few or no paid days, and set out what support is available to them while the guarantee is introduced?

06 How will secure employment and retention be measured?

335 of 572 had considered leaving teaching and 194 of 572 leaving Scotland to teach. Yet 334 / 360 eligible respondents would likely stay or return if offered a suitable permanent post. Q28-Q29.

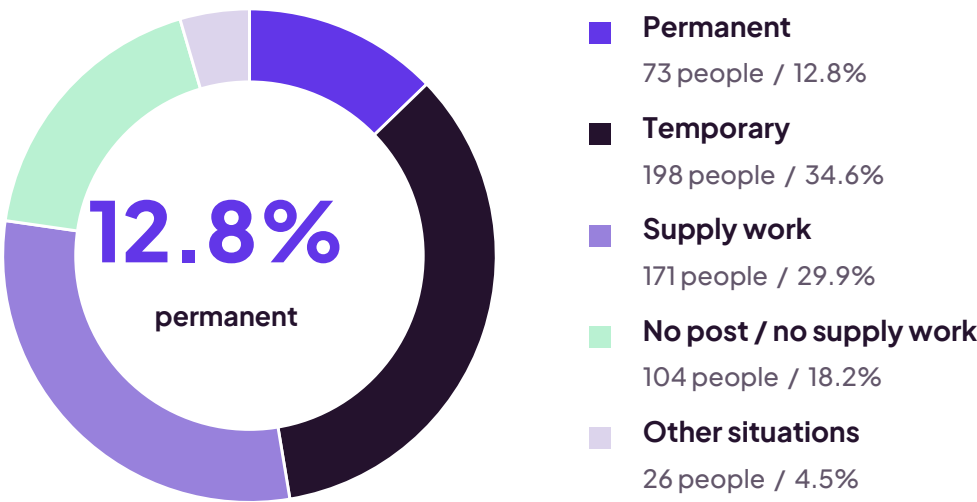
Will ministers report how recurring funding translates into permanent appointments, hours and sustained employment, and what milestones will track retention, including for the 2021-23 cohort and secondary teachers?

Policy context: Scottish Government announcement of 2 September 2026 [1], and the sources on page 24. These are questions arising from respondents' evidence. Survey comparisons are descriptive; reported gaps do not establish unlawful conduct or census manipulation.

03 / EMPLOYMENT EVIDENCE

Employment status and recent history

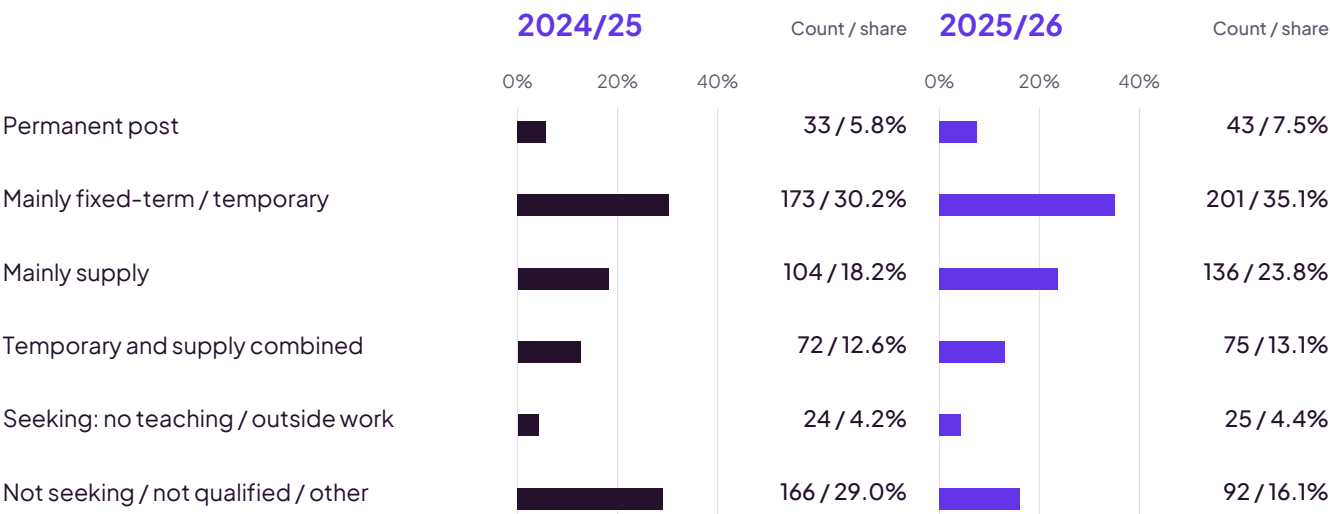
Current employment and recalled main employment in the previous school years answer different questions. They should not be treated as a matched trend in individual careers.



Base: 572 respondents. At the time of response.

Temporary and supply work dominate this sample. The survey does not establish the national proportion of teachers on each contract type.

Recalled main employment in the previous school years



Answered bases: 2024/25, 572; 2025/26, 572. Both plots use the same scale.

Q16 groups full-time and part-time permanent/temporary contracts, including those wanting more hours. Q21 uses grouped main situations for each recalled year. The final historical group includes not applicable and other answers. Answered bases are shown beside each distribution.



04 / ACCESS TO PAID WORK

No work, or only a few days

Paid teaching work since schools returned in each respondent's main council area in August 2026, up to their own response date.



ALMOST 3 IN 10

Had five or fewer paid teaching days since schools returned in August, including no work at all.

127 of 445 respondents / wanted work; available for at least part of the period

ONE COMBINED FIGURE / THE TWO PARTS OF THE 127

16.2%

No paid teaching days at all

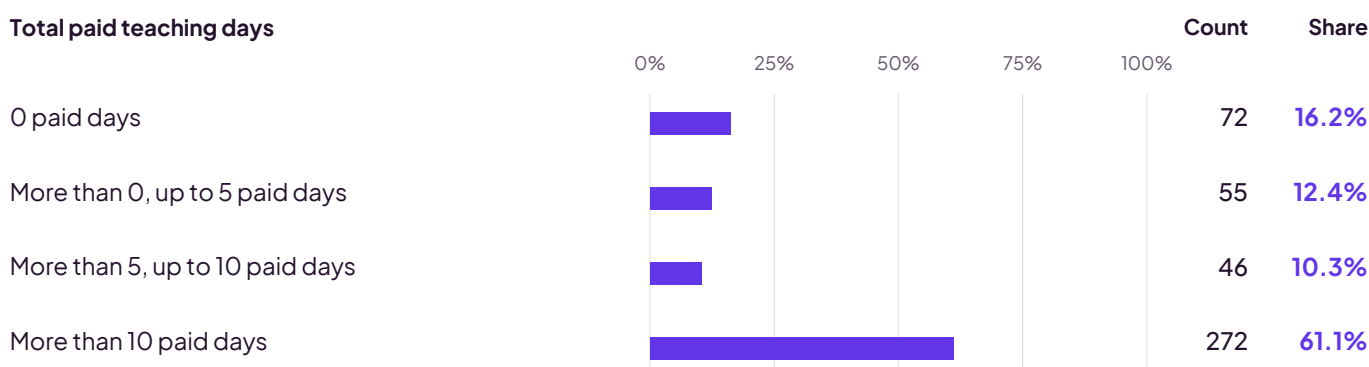
72 of 445 respondents

+

12.4%

More than zero, up to five days

55 of 445 respondents

Total paid teaching days

How “few days” is defined. Five days or fewer includes zero. The group wanted teaching work or additional hours and was available for at least part of the period. Of 484 eligible respondents, 21 could not estimate and 18 gave totals above the feasibility limit; 445 usable totals remain. This is an analytical threshold; availability and response windows vary.

Sources: Q5 and Q7. Separately, 71 of 484 (14.7%) directly reported no work in Q8. That answer has a different base and some inconsistencies with Q7; it must not be added to the 127. These figures do not estimate unemployment or unmet full-time hours.



05 / RECRUITMENT EVIDENCE

Routes into paid teaching work

Recorded effort does not imply access to an offer. These figures describe reported events and experiences since schools returned in August 2026, up to each response.

Permanent posts

598

Applications

70

Interviews offered

7

Job offers

Fixed-term / temporary posts

1,100

Applications

166

Interviews offered

64

Job offers

Base: 538 respondents. Since schools returned in August 2026, up to each response.

The six totals come from 538 respondents with complete numeric answers. They are separate reported events, potentially from different recruitment rounds. They are not a linked application-to-offer funnel, and dividing them does not produce conversion rates.

15**Median days available and actively seeking supply work without a booking**

306 usable Q11 answers

74.4%**Teacher Booker opportunities often or very often gone before a response**

131 / 176 answered

Sources: Q20, Q11 and Q15a; since schools returned in August 2026. Q11 excludes 48 cannot-recall answers and 7 impossible totals from 361 supply seekers. It excludes days already working, unavailable or not seeking. Teacher Booker detail: pp.11-12.



TEACHER BOOKER / ACCESS TO SUPPLY WORK

Teacher Booker: effect on access

Reported experiences among users since schools returned in August 2026, up to each response.



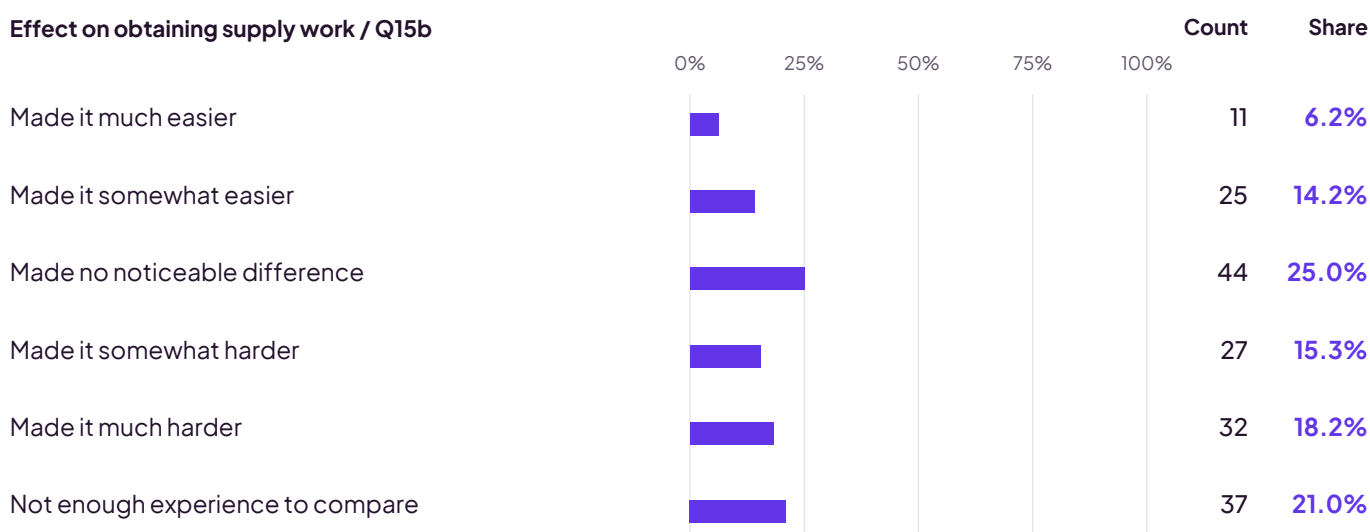
MORE THAN 7 IN 10

Said opportunities were often or very often gone before they could respond.

131 of 176 respondents / Teacher Booker users / Q15a

176 of 361 supply seekers (48.8%) reported using Teacher Booker. The other 185 did not report using it, including unsure answers. Q15 was asked only of users. Non-use does not establish whether a council uses the platform.

Effect on obtaining supply work / Q15b



33.5% said harder (59/176); 20.5% said easier (36/176). Both combine “much” and “somewhat”. The base includes people reporting no noticeable difference and those without enough experience to compare.

These are users’ assessments, not an estimate of the platform’s causal effect on paid days. Council coverage, booking arrangements, subject demand and individual availability may differ. This survey does not provide a verified comparison of councils using and not using Teacher Booker.

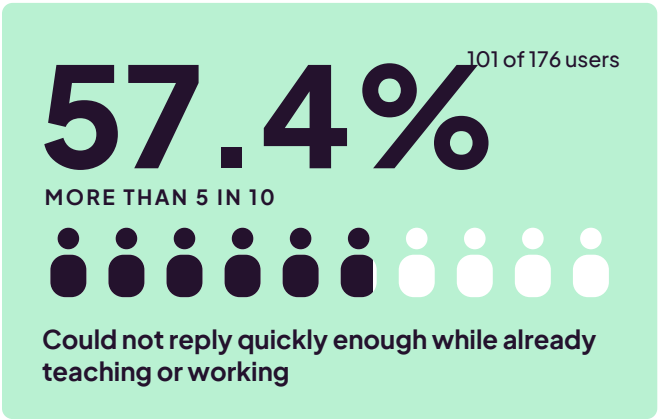
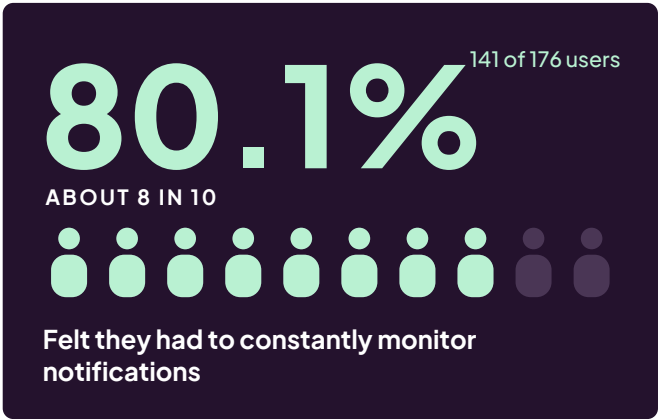
Sources: Q9, Q14, Q15a and Q15b. Base: 176 users for both outcome questions; all 176 answered. Supply-seeker base: 361 of 572. Periods end at each response.



TEACHER BOOKER / RESPONDENTS' EXPERIENCES

Teacher Booker: user experiences

What the 176 users said they experienced. More than one answer could be selected.



Reported experience / Q15c	Count	Share
Felt constant notification monitoring was needed	141	80.1%
Could not reply quickly enough while teaching or working	101	57.4%
Replied very quickly but was still unsuccessful	126	71.6%
Repeated expressions of interest without a booking	85	48.3%
Opportunities offered with too little notice	45	25.6%
Few or no opportunities despite being available	53	30.1%
Opportunities did not match availability	22	12.5%
Opportunities too far away to undertake reasonably	33	18.8%
Experienced technical problems	14	8.0%
Generally no difficulty obtaining work	11	6.2%

The ten named experiences are shown, including those reporting no difficulty. Answers overlap and must not be added. The small “Other” category is not displayed. Labels are shortened; each share uses all 176 users.

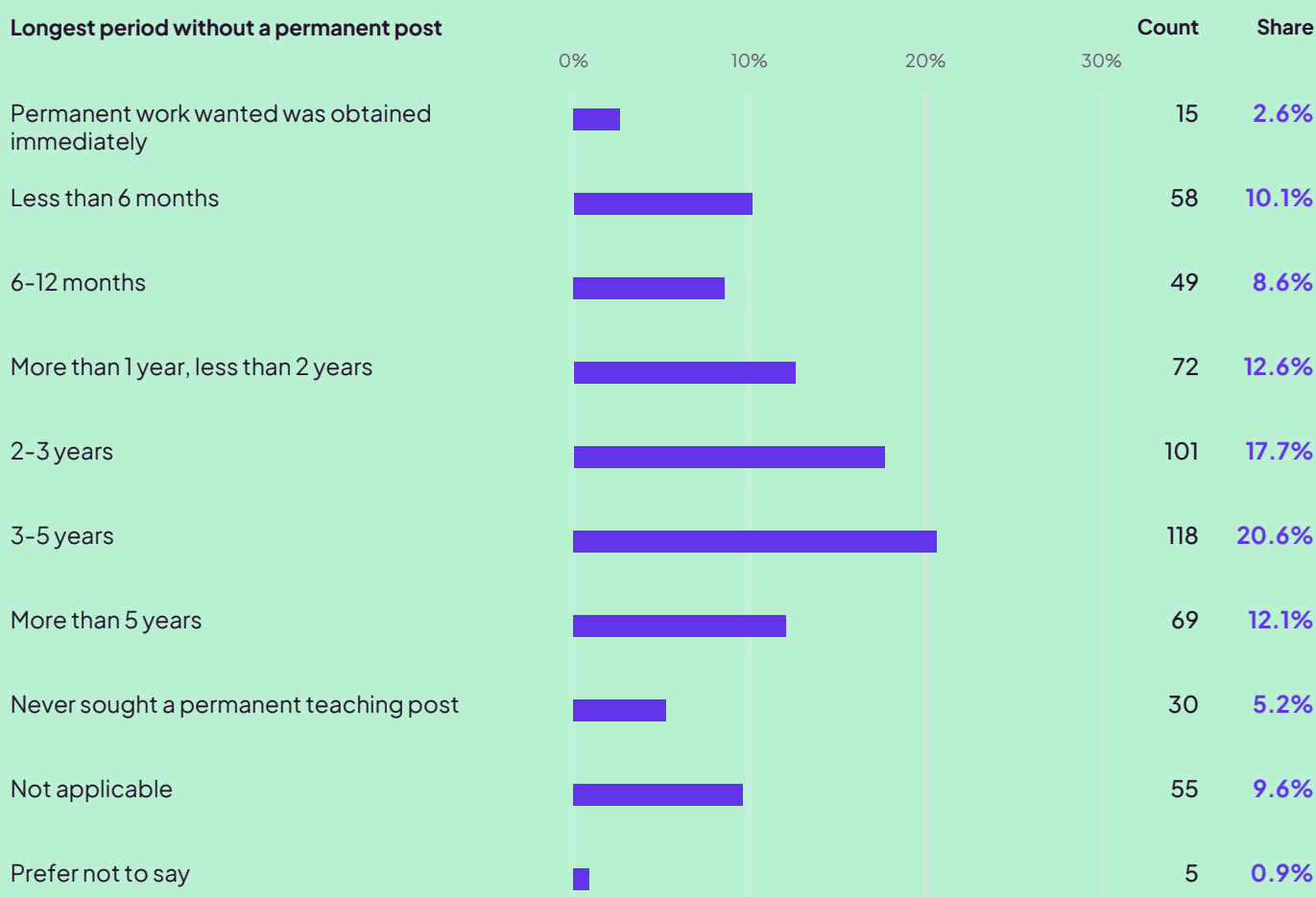
The question for councils: how do their booking rules give available teachers a fair chance to obtain work, including those already teaching when an opportunity appears? The survey warrants scrutiny of allocation and access; it does not establish how any individual booking was decided.



06 / EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Waiting for permanent employment

The longest continuous period since completing probation when respondents wanted a permanent teaching post but did not have one. These are not necessarily current waits.



Base: 572 respondents. Since completing probation.

32.7%



MORE THAN 3 IN 10

Reported a longest wait of at least three years for a permanent post they wanted.

187 of 572 respondents / Q22

Source: Q22, since completing probation; base 572, including never sought, not applicable and prefer-not-to-say answers. The highlighted count combines the “3-5 years” and “More than 5 years” categories.



07 / COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT AND QUALIFYING SERVICE

Reported breaks in council employment

Recalled experience with the council where each respondent had built up the most fixed-term or temporary teaching service. These questions cover any year.

55.2%



MORE THAN 5 IN 10

A temporary post ended, then the same council employed them again after a gap.

257 of 466 respondents / Q25, any year

THE SEQUENCE REPORTED IN Q25

- 1 Temporary post ends
- 2 A gap in employment
- 3 Same council re-employs

51.4%

MORE THAN 5 IN 10



Said a break reset their qualifying service, so they had to build it up again.

132 of 257 respondents / Q26b

31.8%

MORE THAN 3 IN 10



Had a post end and the council re-employ them after a gap, two or more times.

148 of 466 respondents / Q25

Q26b concerns the break closest to the qualifying period. Respondents' accounts; council decisions and entitlements are not independently verified. Q25's base includes "never" and "cannot recall".

19.7%



ABOUT 2 IN 10

Had a contract end before the September teacher census, then worked for the same council again after it.

92 of 466 respondents / Q27

Sources: Q24-Q27. Temporary-service branch; recalled experience, not just 2026. The answers do not establish who initiated a break, deliberate avoidance of permanency, or manipulation of the census.



08 / REPORTED CONSEQUENCES

Financial and personal consequences

Respondents were asked whether difficulty obtaining the amount, type or security of teaching work they wanted had contributed to specified experiences since August 2024.

69.4%

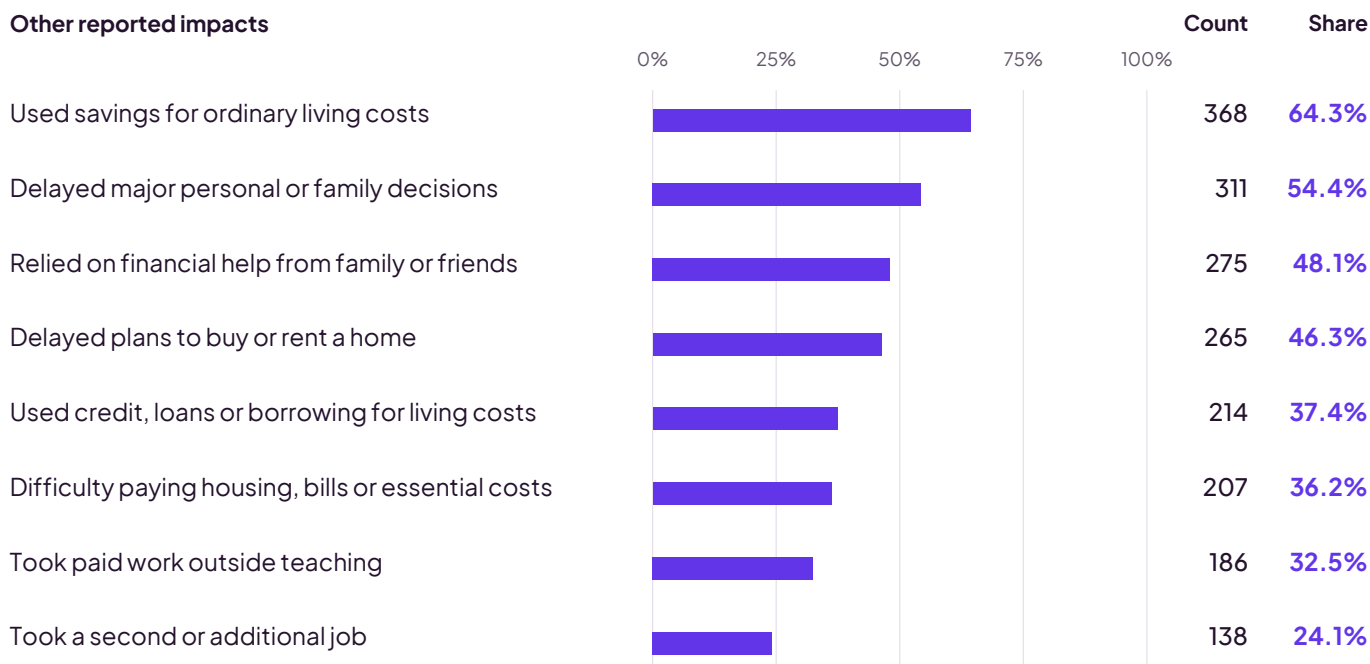


ALMOST 7 IN 10

Reported a negative effect on their mental health or wellbeing.

397 of 572 respondents / Q28, since August 2024

Other reported impacts



Base: 572 respondents.

These are selected financial, personal and wellbeing items from Q28. Respondents could select multiple experiences, so shares cannot be added and categories overlap. Responses attribute a contribution to work difficulty; the survey does not independently establish causation.



09 / COHORT COMPARISON

Variation by full-registration cohort

Q3 records completion of probation or achievement of full registration. It does not record graduation year. Comparisons below concern the three reported impacts since August 2024.

Full-registration cohort	Mental health / wellbeing impact	Delayed personal / family decisions	Used savings for living costs
2026	57.1% 52 / 91	39.6% 36 / 91	54.9% 50 / 91
2024-25	75.9% 126 / 166	58.4% 97 / 166	62.7% 104 / 166
2021-23	78.3% 144 / 184	62.5% 115 / 184	72.3% 133 / 184
2020 or earlier / year not given	57.3% 75 / 131	48.1% 63 / 131	61.8% 81 / 131

2021-23 records the highest published wellbeing impact in this survey: 78.3% (144 of 184). The table allows each outcome to be compared separately.

The comparison is descriptive. Group sizes, career stage and duration exposed to insecure work differ; no statistical significance, causal claim or ranking of all teachers is established. The oldest comparison group also includes respondents whose year was not given.

Sources: Q3 x Q28. Each cell gives count / answered base. "Personal / family" means delaying major personal or family decisions. Full sample profile: appendix A.



10 / SECTOR FOCUS

Secondary respondents' experiences

The sample is predominantly primary, making a separate view of secondary respondents important. Sector means where people mainly sought teaching work.

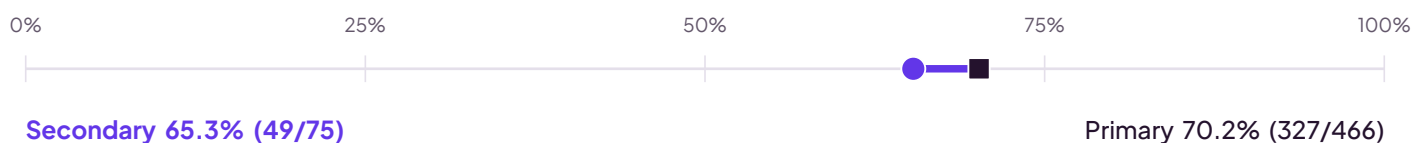
13.1%

75 of 572 respondents mainly sought secondary work. Their experiences below use their own answered bases; the combined smaller-sector group is not labelled as secondary.

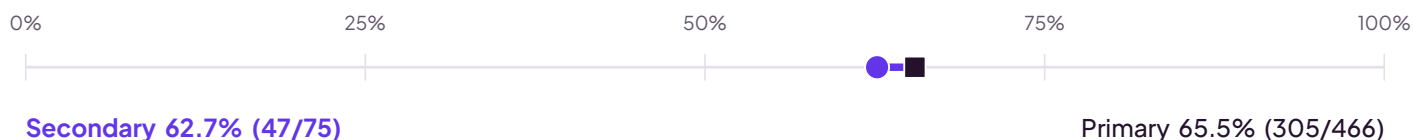
REPORTED IMPACT SINCE AUGUST 2024

● Secondary ■ Primary

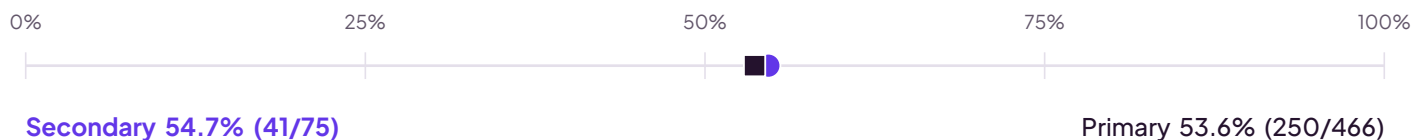
Negative mental health / wellbeing effect



Used savings for ordinary living costs



Delayed major personal or family decisions



Interpretation. Across the three highlighted outcomes, more than half of secondary respondents report an impact. A smaller contribution to the sample does not imply an absence of hardship. These differences describe respondents, not the national workforce.

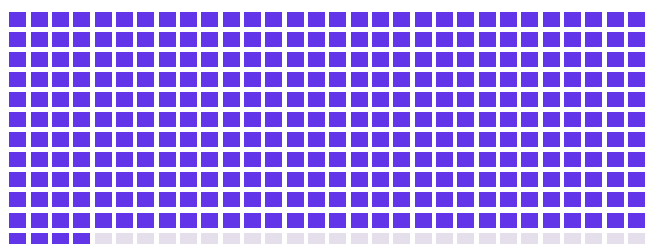
The 33 subject categories and exact counts appear in appendix B. Multiple registrations are possible; this is a subject profile, not an employment-outcome or hardship comparison by subject. Sources: Q2; Q2 subjects; Q28.

11 / RETENTION AND POLICY VIEWS

Retention and guarantee views

Willingness to stay under secure conditions and views on guarantee design are related policy questions, but they are distinct survey measures.

572 TOTAL RESPONSES / 360 ELIGIBLE FOR Q29



Each square represents one eligible respondent.

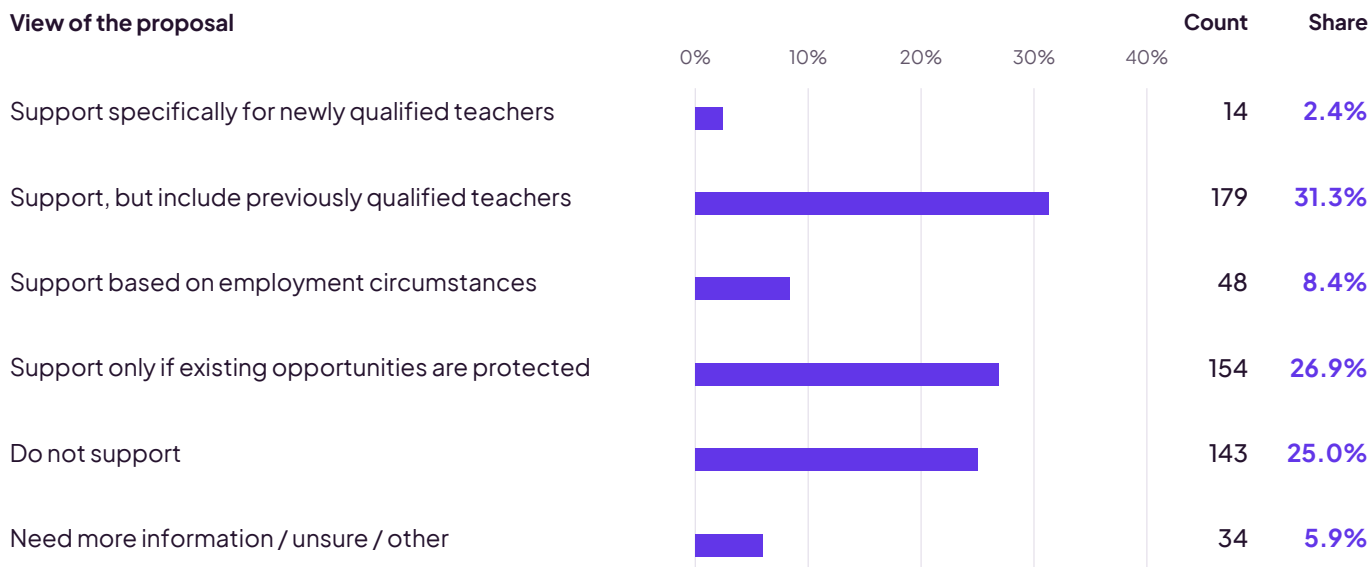
92.8%

334 of 360 eligible respondents would definitely or probably remain in or return to teaching in Scotland if offered a suitable permanent post.

360 is a subset of 572, not an additional group. Q29 followed selected Q28 responses about considering leaving, applying outside teaching or leaving teaching. It records a conditional intention, not a retention forecast.

Views on a three-year guarantee

View of the proposal



Base: 572 respondents.

Support is conditional in several different ways, and opposition is also substantial in this sample. Do not collapse these categories into a single claim of unqualified support. Q30 categories are grouped to protect small answers. Design priorities appear on page 36; scrutiny questions on page 7.



12 / MEDIA AND PARLIAMENTARY FACTS

Statements the evidence supports

Use the counts, question bases and time periods with any quoted percentage. The following formulations can be used with attribution to this survey.

No paid teaching work

“71 of 484 respondents (14.7%) who wanted teaching work or additional hours and were available for at least part of the period reported no paid teaching work at all since schools returned in August 2026.”

Q8; up to each response date. Availability need not cover the whole period. Includes cannot-recall answers in the base.

Five days or fewer

“Among 445 respondents who wanted work, were available for at least part of the period and supplied usable totals, 127 (28.5%) reported five paid teaching days or fewer across all teaching arrangements since schools returned in August 2026.”

Q5 and Q7. A defined analytical threshold including zero; separate from the direct Q8 measure.

Breaks in council employment

“257 of 466 respondents (55.2%) in the temporary-service section recalled a post ending followed by re-employment by the same council after a gap. Of those 257, 132 reported that a break reset their qualifying service.”

Q25 and Q26b. Recalled experience in any year; reported resets have not been independently verified.

Employment around the September census

“92 of 466 respondents (19.7%) recalled a temporary contract ending before a September teacher census and subsequent employment by the same council after the census.”

Q27. Any year; neither motive nor manipulation is established by the answer.

Keep the periods and populations clear. Current work measures end on each person's response date. Council-service questions ask about recalled experience in any year. These findings describe a self-selected sample, not national prevalence or independently verified council conduct.



13 / SELECTED RESPONDENT TESTIMONY

Respondents on money and family plans

Consented, reviewed excerpts bring individual experiences into focus. They illustrate the evidence; they do not measure the prevalence of a view.

SAVINGS AND EVERYDAY COSTS

“ I have spent almost **£10,000 of my savings** on day to day living costs. I expect to have **zero savings left** by the end of this school year.

ANONYMOUS RESPONDENT / Q32 / ANSWER 078

A LIFE ON HOLD

“ **6 years on** and I am still in an unstable position, unable to start a family or have peace of mind.

ANONYMOUS RESPONDENT / Q32 / ANSWER 125

SAFETY AND THE PRESSURE TO PROTECT SERVICE

“ No employee should feel that they must tolerate being physically assaulted in order to protect their employment status.

ANONYMOUS RESPONDENT / Q32 / ANSWER 252

Excerpts match the lightly proofread written-evidence companion, where answers can be found by number. Emphasis added in bold. Selection is illustrative, not representative.

14 / SELECTED RESPONDENT TESTIMONY

Respondents on staying in teaching

Individual accounts of financial security, decisions about teaching and the position of teachers who are already qualified.

WORKING NIGHT SHIFTS WHILE SEEKING SUPPLY

“ I have now had to take a job in a care home for elderly doing night shifts– which again is taking me away from my own children and reducing my availability for supply– however this is not stopping me from trying every day.

ANONYMOUS RESPONDENT / Q32 / ANSWER 257

CONSIDERING LEAVING AGAIN

“ I had to move abroad for a few years due to a lack of teaching jobs in Scotland. I returned this year and the situation has not improved. I am thinking of leaving again because I am relying on family.

ANONYMOUS RESPONDENT / Q32 / ANSWER 050

QUALIFIED TEACHERS LEFT OUT OF THE GUARANTEE

“ I have spent years studying and training to become a teacher, only to find myself without the job security that I had expected after qualifying. While I completely support the proposed three year guarantee for newly qualified teachers, I believe that consideration also needs to be given to **teachers who have already completed their probationary [year]**.

ANONYMOUS RESPONDENT / Q32 / ANSWER 128

Consented excerpts, lightly proofread as in the companion; added words appear in brackets. Emphasis added in bold. These individual views do not establish final eligibility, displacement or future job availability.



15 / WRITTEN EVIDENCE

Language in written responses

Q32 received 320 written answers. Larger words appear in more distinct answers; each word is counted once per answer.



Most frequent terms: number of written answers

supply	153	teachers	112
permanent	134	teacher	104
work	129	time	101
job	118	school	98
year	117	teaching	97
years	113	contract	82

Method: exact lowercase words; common English words removed; no stemming or synonym merging. The cloud shows the 40 most frequent remaining terms, all present in at least five answers. Singular and plural forms remain separate.

Mentions are not numbers of people experiencing a particular hardship and do not establish sentiment. All eligible written answers contribute; no individual response is reproduced in this aggregate.



16 / METHODS AND SOURCES

How the evidence was prepared

The analysis uses the survey's questionnaire structure and protected aggregate outputs. Findings should be read with these design and reporting limits.

01 Population and recruitment

The Scottish Teacher Employment Survey 2026 is an open-link survey for teachers with experience of seeking teaching work in Scotland. Participation is self-selected. There is no probability sampling, workforce weighting or claim of national representativeness. The survey closed on 4 October 2026. This report covers all 572 eligible responses.

02 Question bases and periods

Branching determines which respondents are eligible for each question. Missing, unknown and inapplicable answers are distinct from zero. Current-period answers end on each person's completion date. Recalled school-year employment, longest waits since probation and impacts since August 2024 are labelled separately.

03 Protection and profiles

Council participation and subject-profile counts are reported exactly, including small and zero counts. Sensitive outcome distributions retain small-group protection: percentages require at least 20 answers; bases below 50 are small; non-zero counts below five and complements are protected. Unsafe comparisons are withheld and smaller groups may be combined.

04 Checks and interpretation

Impossible teaching-day totals above the generous weekday bound from 1 August 2026 to each response date (UK time) are omitted from that question only. Recall, numeric estimates and reporting error remain possible. Comparisons are descriptive; no causal or statistical-significance claims are made. Quotations are consented and editorially reviewed.

SOURCES & CITATION

Survey source. Scottish Teachers for Permanence, *Scottish Teacher Employment Survey 2026*, final dataset, all responses to the close on 4 October 2026. Question identifiers are supplied with the findings. Final edition, 4 October 2026.

[1] Official policy context. Scottish Government, *Excellence for every child*, published 2 September 2026 (amended 3 September). <https://www.gov.scot/news/excellence-for-every-child/>. Accessed 2 October 2026.

REFERENCE / THE OPENING ARGUMENT

Sources for the policy context

Original statements, published policies and a council response to STfP. Links open the source documents.

A1 Scottish Government / [Supporting Education and Skills](#)

18 January 2026; statement by Jenny Gilruth.

A2 Education Scotland / [Nurture in Scotland: Survey findings](#)

Definition of a nurturing approach; relationships, learning and wellbeing.

A3 National Discussion on Education / [All Learners in Scotland Matter](#)

31 May 2023; independent report, sections 6.1.16–6.1.18.

A4 COSLA / [Teacher numbers to increase](#)

9 August 2021; recurring funding and permanent recruitment.

A5 Scottish Parliament / [Official Report: 17 November 2022](#)

Column 49; Shirley-Anne Somerville on permanent funding and contracts.

A6 Scottish Government / [Fair Work: action plan](#)

19 February 2021; section 5, Fair Work First.

A7 COSLA / [Response to EIS Release on Fair Work](#)

Statement on security, salaries, pensions and working conditions.

A8 Aberdeen City Council / [LNCT / Use of Temporary Contracts for Teaching Staff](#)

Agreement of 18 May 2021; purpose and transfer to permanent status.

A9 Falkirk Council / [Short-term supply / Fixed term supply employment for teachers](#)

Published policy; monitoring, renewal and continuity of service.

A10 Scottish Government / [Programme for Government 2026 to 2031](#)

1 September 2026; chapter 4, teaching workforce stability.

A11 North Lanarkshire Council / [Probationer Teacher Employment Outcomes 2024-25](#)

FOI response to STfP, 11 November 2025; questions 1 and 2.

A12 COSLA / [MSP Briefing Summary on Teacher Numbers](#)

30 October 2024; funding, pupil rolls and council finances.

Dates identify the statement or document being cited; older policies are not presented as proof of current practice. [1], the September 2026 guarantee announcement, is listed with the survey methodology on page 23.



APPENDIX A / SAMPLE PROFILE

Sector and registration profile

The distributions show who answered the relevant questions. They are not estimates of Scotland's teaching workforce or of the mix of teachers seeking work nationally.

MAIN SECTOR OF JOB SEARCH

572 respondents Count · share

Primary

466 · 81.5%

Secondary

75 · 13.1%

ASN / special education

14 · 2.4%

Early learning / nursery teaching role

0 · 0.0%

More than one sector

17 · 3.0%

Other

0 · 0.0%

FULL REGISTRATION / PROBATION

572 respondents Count · share

2026

91 · 15.9%

2024-25

166 · 29.0%

2021-23

184 · 32.2%

2020 or earlier

118 · 20.6%

Non-year answers

13 · 2.3%

READING THE COHORT ANALYSIS

Q3 asks when respondents completed probation or otherwise achieved full registration, **not when they graduated**. The analysis on page 16 combines the oldest cohort and year-not-given group so that the published outcome comparisons meet reporting rules.

Sources: Q2 and Q3. The full sample profile preserves non-year answers separately. Sector refers to the main sector where teaching work was sought.



APPENDIX B / SECONDARY SUBJECT PROFILE

Registered secondary subjects

This multiple-response question was asked only of respondents mainly seeking secondary work. It records registration specialisms, not employment outcomes by subject.

75 respondents

All 33 subject categories

REGISTERED SUBJECT	n	%	REGISTERED SUBJECT	n	%
Art and Design	4	5.3%	Italian	0	0.0%
Biology with Science	9	12.0%	Mandarin	1	1.3%
Business Education	1	1.3%	Mathematics	1	1.3%
Chemistry with Science	1	1.3%	Media Studies	2	2.7%
Classics	0	0.0%	Modern Studies	18	24.0%
Computing Science	0	0.0%	Music	2	2.7%
Dance	0	0.0%	Philosophy	0	0.0%
Drama	2	2.7%	Physics with Science	3	4.0%
Economics	0	0.0%	Physical Education	6	8.0%
English	12	16.0%	Psychology	1	1.3%
French	1	1.3%	Religious Education	2	2.7%
Gaelic	0	0.0%	Sociology	2	2.7%
Geography	3	4.0%	Spanish	2	2.7%
Geology	0	0.0%	TESOL ¹	0	0.0%
German	2	2.7%	Technological Education	1	1.3%
History	19	25.3%	Other	2	2.7%
Home Economics	1	1.3%			

¹ Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

Respondents may select more than one subject; shares can exceed 100% in total. Zero means no respondent selected that subject in this survey. These profile counts do not measure subject vacancies or the national supply of teachers. Source: Q2 subject follow-up.



APPENDIX C / GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Council participation

Counts refer to the main council where work was sought. They describe survey coverage and do not compare council performance or link a council to a respondent's hardship outcome.

565 of 572 respondents named one of these council areas. The remaining 7 responses are not allocated here. Small and zero participation counts are shown.

COUNCIL	RESPONSES	COUNCIL	RESPONSES
Aberdeen City	11	Inverclyde	12
Aberdeenshire	26	Midlothian	4
Angus	12	Moray	6
Argyll and Bute	3	Na h-Eileanan Siar	0
City of Edinburgh	44	North Ayrshire	14
Clackmannanshire	8	North Lanarkshire	42
Dumfries and Galloway	15	Orkney Islands	1
Dundee City	10	Perth and Kinross	15
East Ayrshire	15	Renfrewshire	25
East Dunbartonshire	16	Scottish Borders	4
East Lothian	10	Shetland Islands	0
East Renfrewshire	22	South Ayrshire	33
Falkirk	18	South Lanarkshire	38
Fife	21	Stirling	18
Glasgow City	53	West Dunbartonshire	21
Highland	15	West Lothian	33

Source: Q4, main council where work was sought. This differs from councils where supply was sought and the council used for qualifying service. Supply-search council groups may overlap; no council-specific outcome is inferred from this table.

MEDIA & PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES

media@teachers4perm.com / teachers4perm.com/media

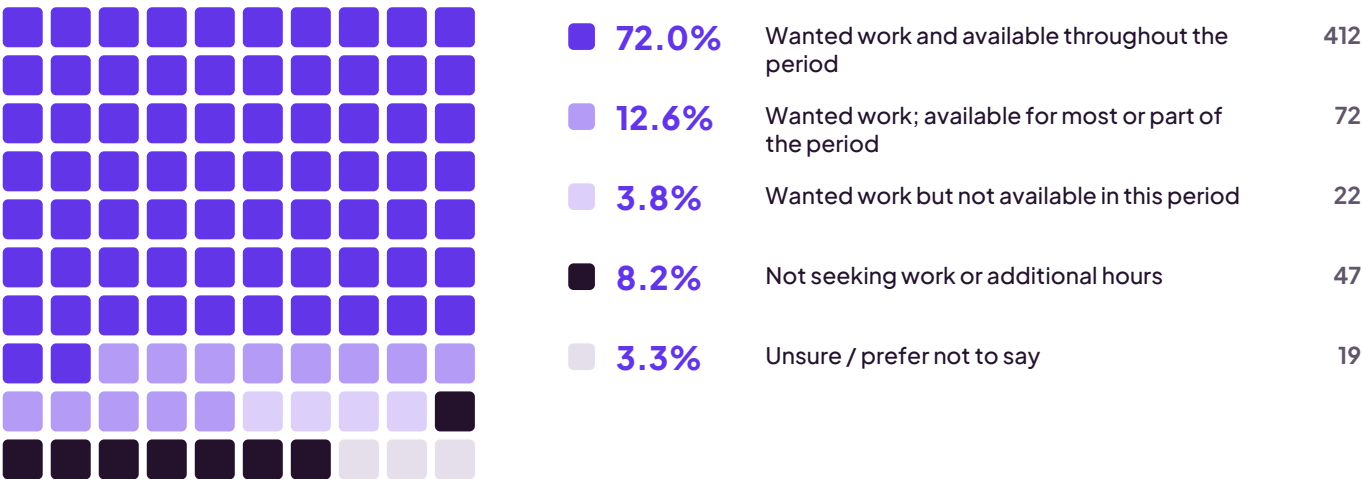


FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / WORK WANTED

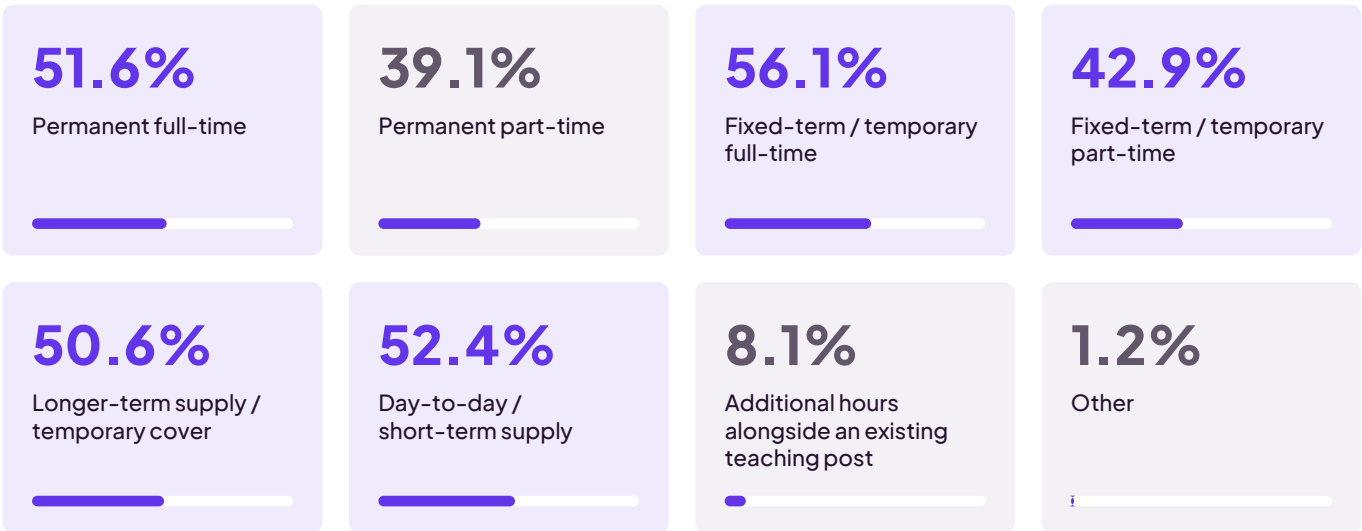
Work wanted and availability

Wanted hours and preferred arrangements help distinguish a lack of work from a choice to work less.

Availability since August 2026 / Q5 / base 572 / each square is 1%



Types of work sought / Q6 / 506 wanting work or more hours / more than one answer allowed



Q6 shares overlap: most respondents sought several kinds of work, including supply alongside permanent posts. Q1: 561 of 572 (98.1%) were fully registered. Periods end at each response.

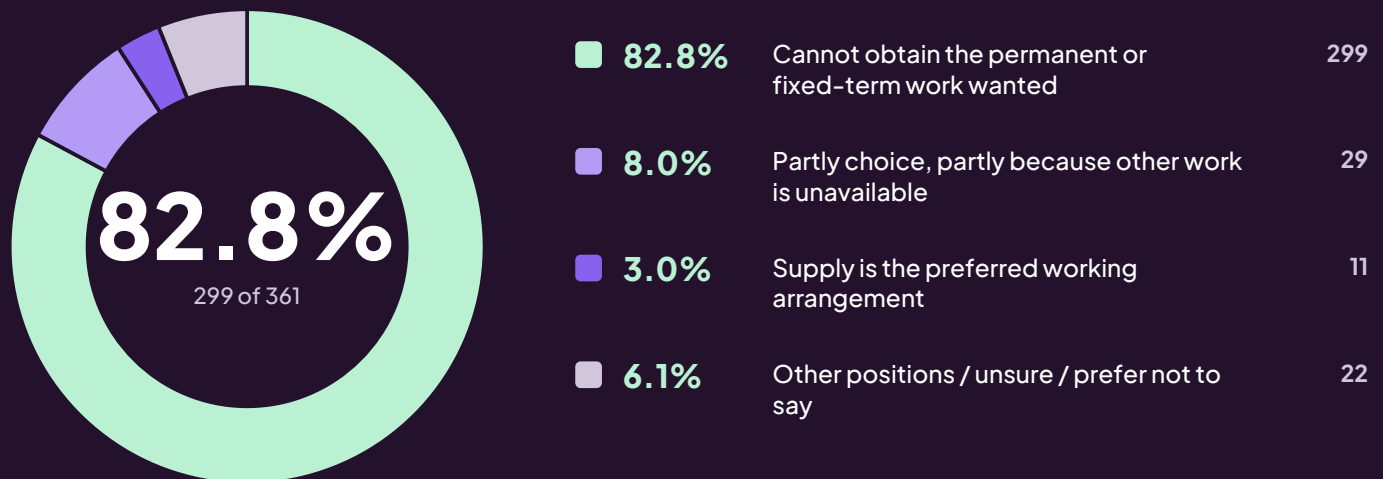


FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / SUPPLY CHOICE AND AVAILABILITY

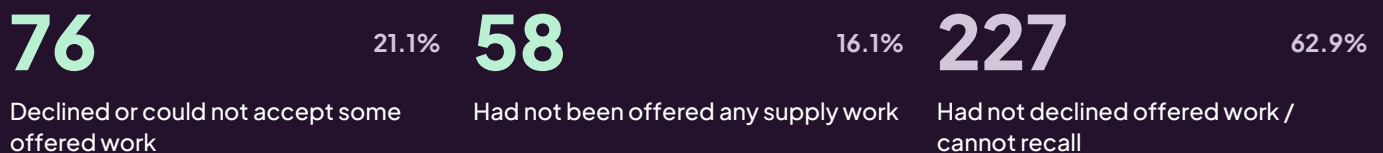
Supply choice and declined offers

361 respondents (63.1% of 572) had tried to obtain supply work since schools returned in August 2026.

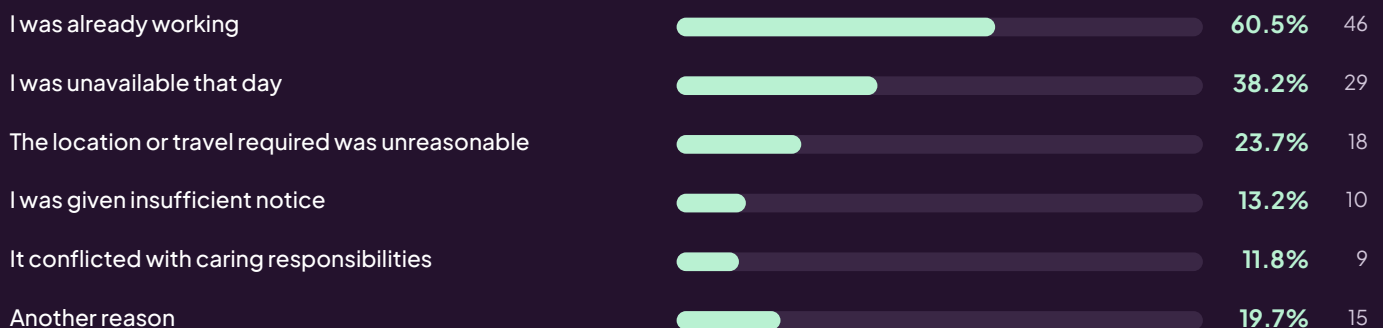
Is supply the arrangement they want? / Q13 / base 361



Offers they could not take / Q12 / base 361



Reasons among the 76 who declined or could not accept work / more than one allowed



The small unsuitable-hours category is not displayed; no respondent selected prefer not to say. Not all supply seekers were available throughout the period. An offer received is not always an offer that can be accepted.

FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / SUPPLY-LIST ACCESS

Council supply-list access

Q10 records a separate status in each council selected: 564 council-status entries from 361 supply seekers.

Status of each council supply-list entry / base 564 entries



- Approved; had received work **47.3% (267)**
- Approved; no work received **30.1% (170)**
- Application being processed **8.3% (47)**
- Application declined **4.1% (23)**
- Wanted to apply; list closed **7.4% (42)**
- Another barrier to joining **1.2% (7)**
- No longer seeking supply there **1.4% (8)**



Entries are not unique teachers: one person can hold different statuses in several councils. Figures do not compare council performance.

Supply seekers by council / Q10 / 361 respondents could select several councils



Small and zero counts are shown. They show where supply work was sought, not where respondents live or which councils use Teacher Booker. Q9-Q10; since August 2026 to each response.

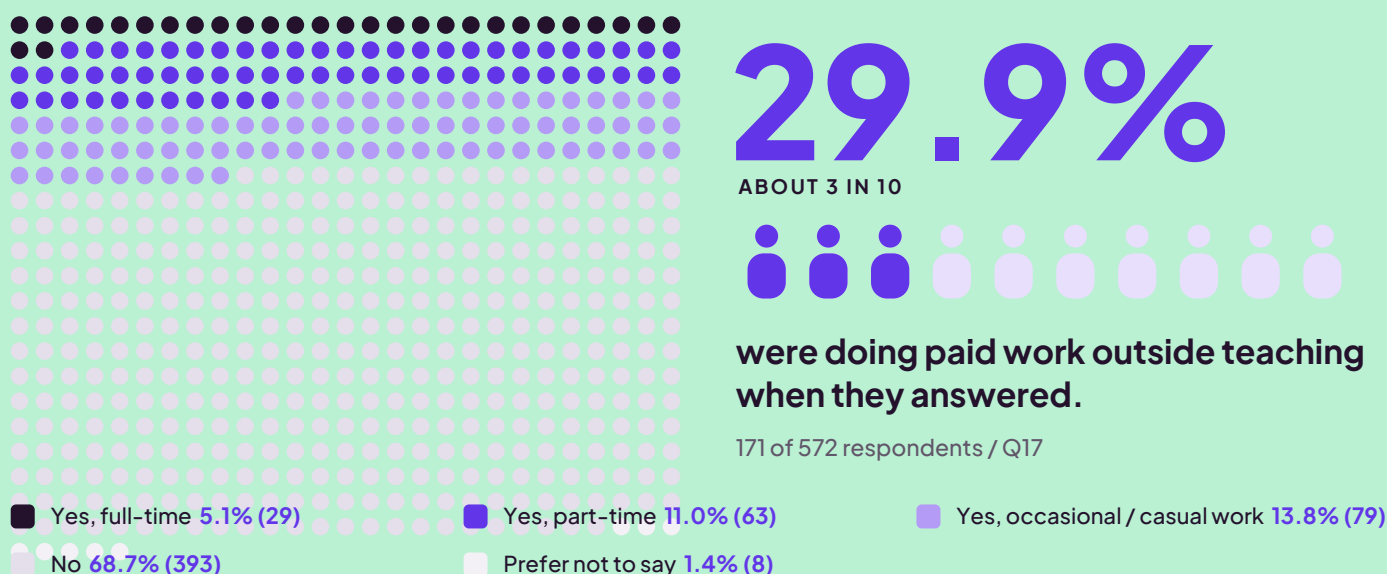


FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / WORK AND HOUSEHOLD INCOME

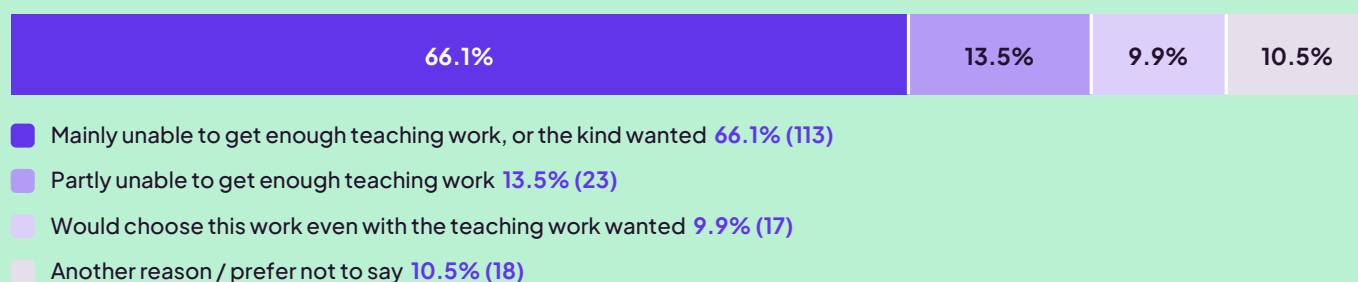
Outside work and Universal Credit

Current outside work and reasons for claiming Universal Credit are separate measures with different bases.

Paid work outside teaching at response / Q17 / each dot is one of 572 respondents



Why outside work? / Q17b / 171 doing outside work



10.1%

ABOUT 1 IN 10

had claimed Universal Credit, with difficulty getting teaching work or hours as a reason.

58 of 572 respondents / Q18, since August 2026

Q17a received 167 descriptions of outside jobs; they are not published here. The UC figure excludes claims described as unrelated to teaching-work availability; it is not a measure of eligibility or of all benefit receipt.

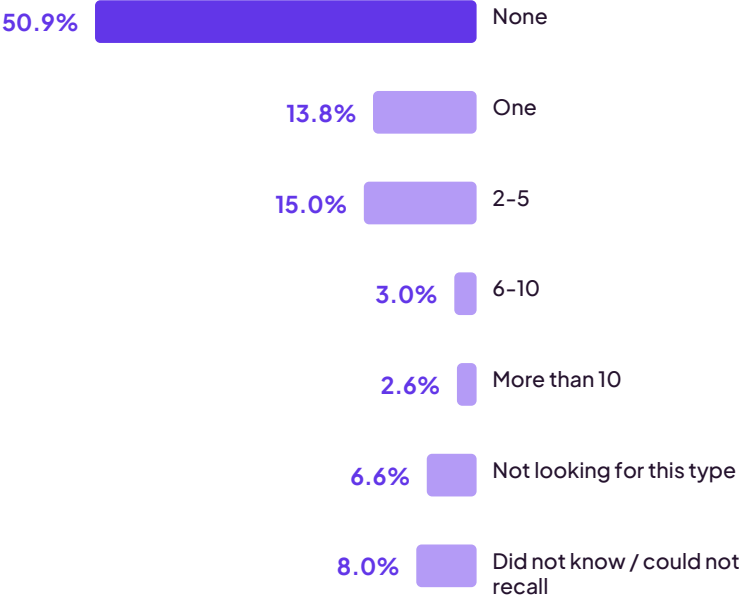


FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / SUITABLE ADVERTISED POSTS

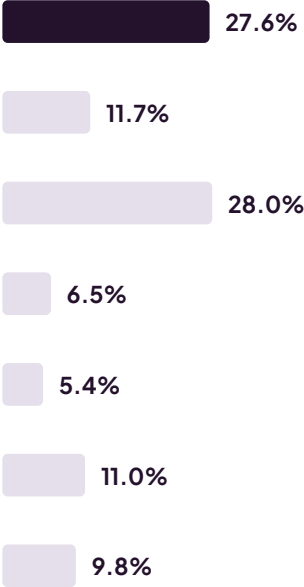
Suitable posts seen and wanted hours

Q19 asks about suitable posts seen in the main council and sector where each respondent was looking, since August 2026.

Permanent posts seen



Fixed-term / temporary posts seen



50.9%

MORE THAN 5 IN 10



Had seen no suitable permanent post advertised.

291 of 572 respondents / Q19

27.6%

MORE THAN 2 IN 10



Had seen no suitable fixed-term or temporary post.

158 of 572 respondents / Q19

12.9%

MORE THAN 1 IN 10

were in part-time posts but wanted more hours when they answered.

74 of 572 respondents / Q16



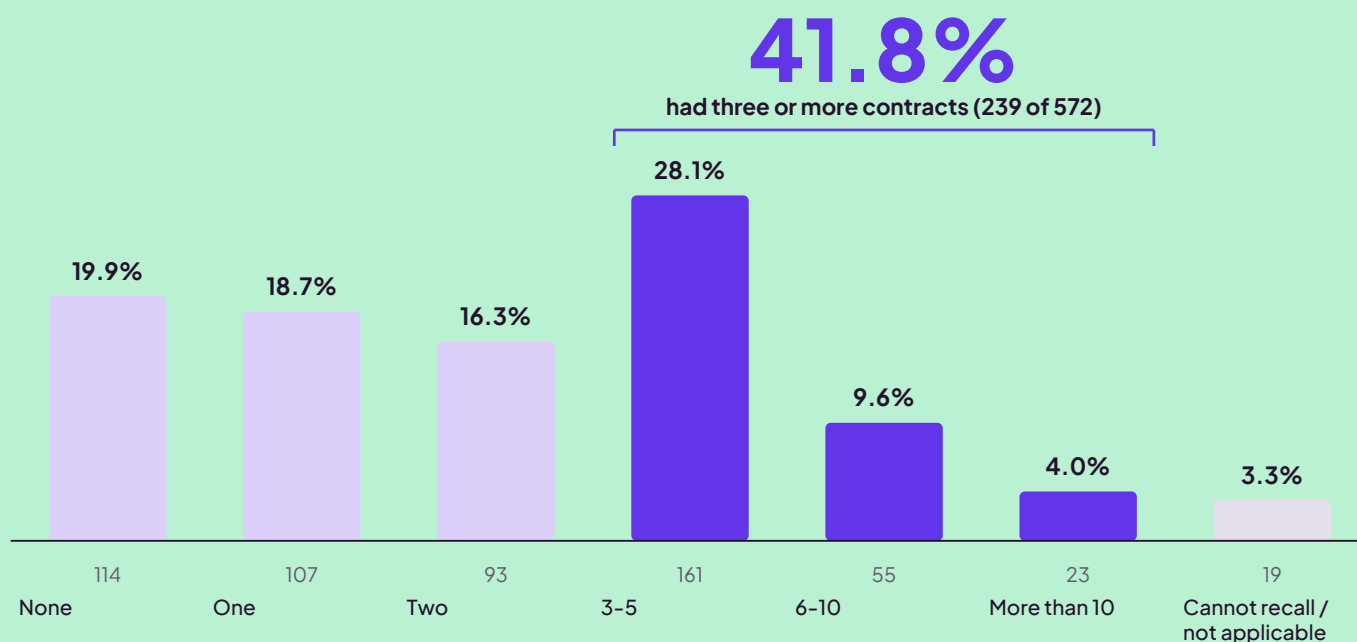
Bases include those not looking for that type of post or unable to recall. Posts seen are not a vacancy census.

FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / CONTRACTS AND LOCAL RULES

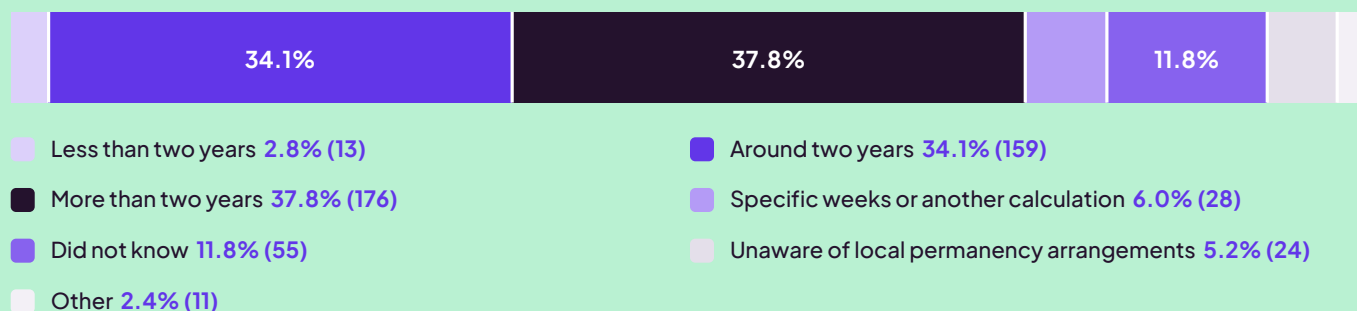
Contracts and qualifying periods

Contract histories cover the period since probation. Knowledge of local rules comes from the temporary-service branch.

Separate fixed-term or temporary contracts since probation / Q23 / base 572



What qualifying period did they think applied? / Q24b / base 466



79 of 466 (17.0%) did not know the period or were unaware of local permanency arrangements. Answers describe teachers' understanding of the rules in their council.

Q24 records respondents' knowledge, not verified council rules. There were 175 optional written explanations of the calculation. Contract counts do not establish continuous service or legal entitlement.

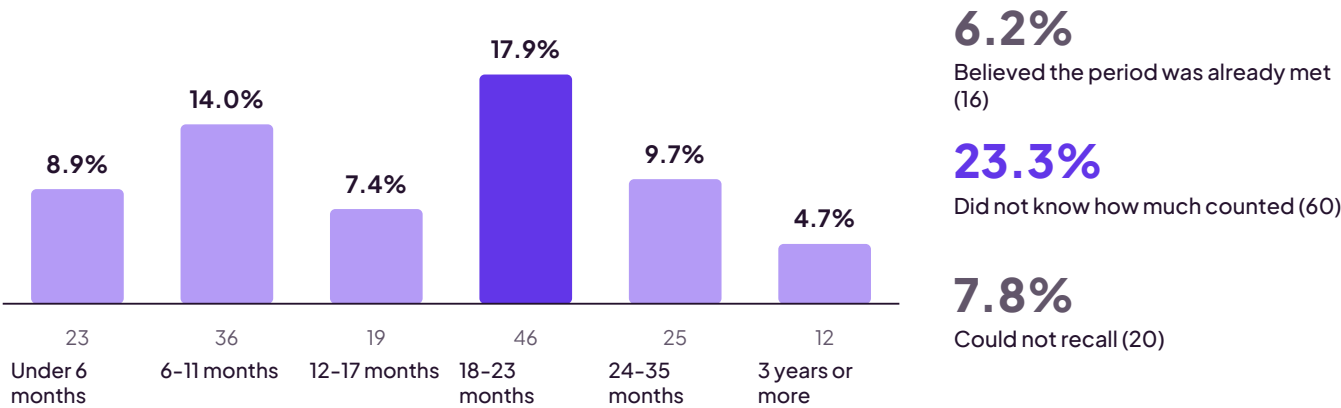


FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / SERVICE BEFORE AND AFTER A GAP

Service before and after a break

257 respondents who recalled a gap answered about the break closest to the qualifying period for permanency.

Service they believed counted before the break / Q26a / base 257



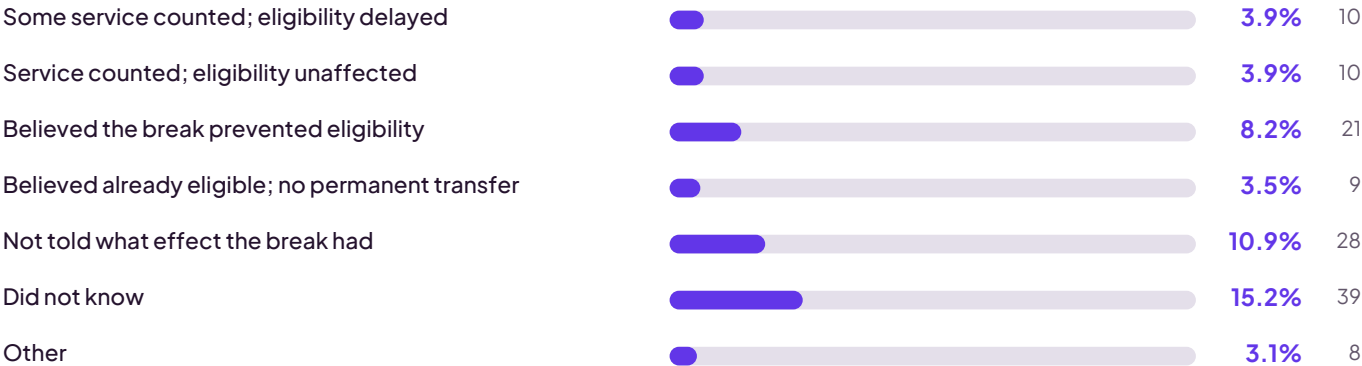
51.4%

MORE THAN 5 IN 10

Said their qualifying service was reset after the break, so they had to start building it again.

132 of 257 respondents / Q26b

Other reported effects of the break / Q26b



67 of 257 (26.1%) were not told the effect or did not know it. These are respondents' accounts of recalled experience in any year, not verified service calculations or legal findings.



FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / ALL REPORTED CONSEQUENCES

All reported consequences

Q28: difficulty obtaining the amount, type or security of teaching work wanted had contributed to these experiences since August 2024.

Share of all 572 respondents / more than one answer allowed / tile fill shows the share

MONEY

64.3%

Using savings for living costs

368

48.1%

Help from family or friends

275

37.4%

Credit or borrowing

214

36.2%

Difficulty paying rent or bills

207

WORK

32.5%

Paid work outside teaching

186

24.1%

A second or additional job

138

23.8%

Travelling further for teaching

136

HOME AND FAMILY

54.4%

Delaying personal or family decisions

311

46.3%

Delaying buying or renting a home

265

LEAVING

58.6%

Considering leaving teaching

335

32.9%

Applying for jobs outside teaching

188

33.9%

Considering teaching outside Scotland

194

24.0%

Considering moving within Scotland

137

17.8%

Left teaching for now or for good

102

WELLBEING

69.4%

Harm to mental health or wellbeing

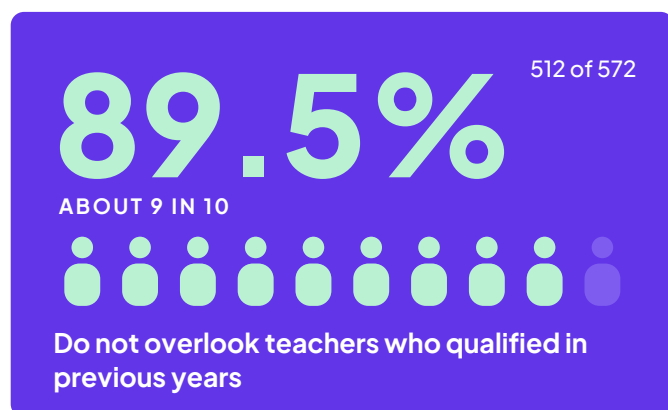
397

40 of 572 (7.0%) selected none of these. Categories overlap. Considering leaving is distinct from having left. Q28 is a recalled contribution since August 2024, not a forecast of departures. Labels are shortened.

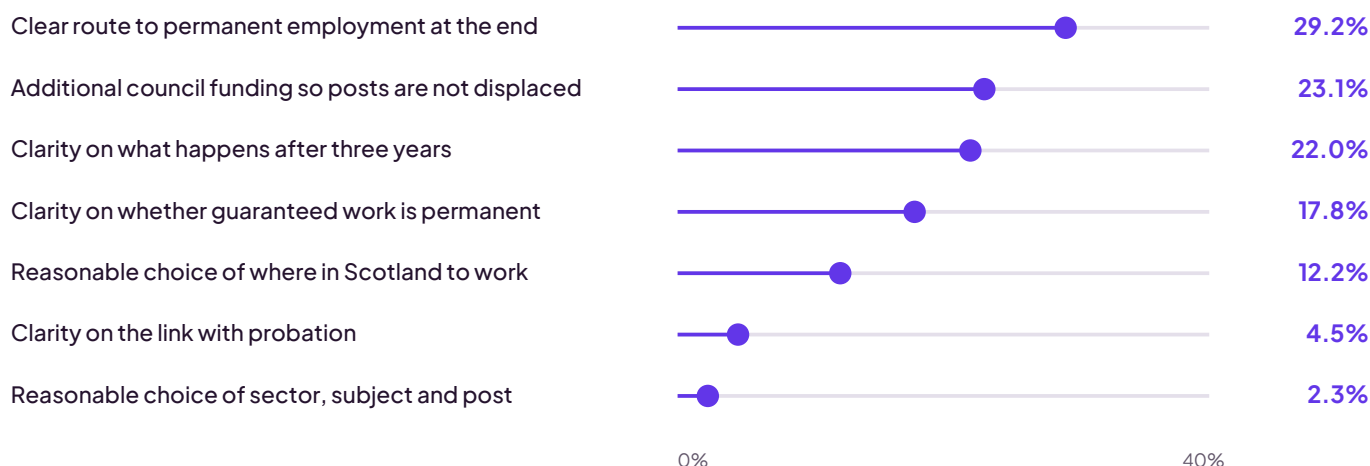
FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / GUARANTEE DESIGN AND RETENTION

Guarantee priorities and retention

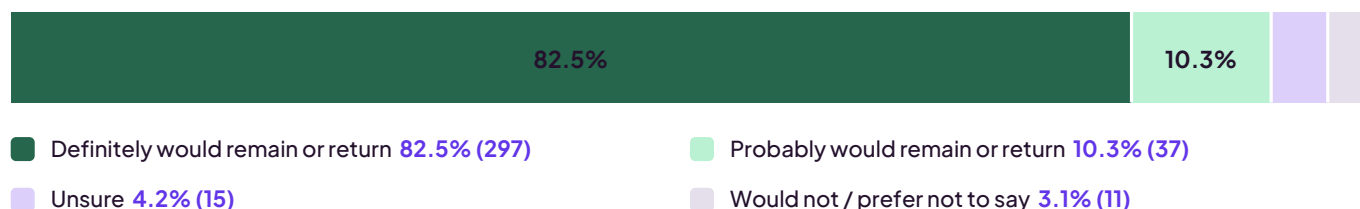
Q31 asked about design priorities for the proposed three-year guarantee. Multiple answers were allowed; base 572.



Other priorities selected



Would remain in or return to teaching if offered a suitable permanent post / Q29 / 360 follow-up respondents



334 of 360 (92.8%) would definitely or probably remain or return. The 360 are a follow-up subset of the 572: those considering leaving, applying elsewhere or already gone. Conditional intentions do not establish future retention.



FURTHER SURVEY FINDINGS / QUESTIONNAIRE AUDIT

Question-by-question coverage

All 32 numbered questions and their follow-ups were checked against this edition. Grouped and non-published detail is identified below.

Q1	Registration position	28	Q17	Outside work, reasons and descriptions	31
Q2	Sector and registered subjects	17, 25–26	Q18	Universal Credit and work access	31
Q3	Full-registration cohorts	16, 25	Q19	Suitable posts seen	32
Q4	Main council where work sought	27	Q20	Applications, interviews and offers	10
Q5	Wanted work and availability	9, 28	Q21	Previous school-year employment	8
Q6	Types of work sought	28	Q22	Longest wait for permanence	13
Q7	Paid teaching days	9	Q23	Number of temporary contracts	33
Q8	Periods without paid work	9	Q24	Council and qualifying-service knowledge	14, 33
Q9	Tried to obtain supply	29–30	Q25	Breaks and re-employment	14
Q10	Council supply access and status	30	Q26	Service before and after the break	14, 34
Q11	Available supply days unbooked	10	Q27	Census-related contract sequence	14, 19
Q12	Offers declined and reasons	29	Q28	All reported consequences	15–17, 35
Q13	Whether supply is a choice	29	Q29	Conditional stay / return intention	18, 36
Q14	Teacher Booker use	11	Q30	Views on the guarantee	18
Q15	Booker access, effect, experiences	11–12	Q31	Guarantee design priorities	7, 36
Q16	Current employment and wanted hours	8, 32	Q32	Written accounts and language	20–22

Coverage does not mean every raw answer is printed. Numeric distributions are summarised; some small categories are grouped or protected. Council-status outcomes are pooled rather than linked to small named groups. Q17a and Q24's optional text are counted, not quoted. Q32 uses six consented excerpts and an aggregate word analysis.

Consent and follow-up preferences are permissions, not findings. Contact details and unapproved written responses are not part of this report. Final dataset: 572 responses through 4 October 2026.