

Fitness to Practise Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2026

This report provides information and data about the fitness to practice work of the Education Workforce Council (EWC) for the period covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

About the EWC

About us

The Education Workforce Council (EWC) is the independent, professional regulator for the education workforce in Wales.

Established by the [Education \(Wales\) Act 2014](#) (the Act), we regulate education practitioners in 13 different registration categories spanning schools, further education, youth work, adult learning, and work-based learning. Our Register of Education Practitioners is the biggest public register of any profession in Wales, and the most wide-ranging register of education professionals in the world, with over 91,000 practitioners registered.

Regulation

Our core function is to regulate in the public interest. To do this, we first maintain a [Register of Education Practitioners](#) (the Register) eligible to practise in schools, further education, youth work, and work-based/adult learning. Secondly, we publish a [Code of Professional Conduct and Practice](#) which sets out the standards expected of those registered. Thirdly, we investigate and hear allegations of unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence, or relevant criminal offences.

The Register of Education Practitioners

As of 10 May 2024, we register and regulate 13 education practitioner groups in Wales. All are legally required to register. Our Register is the biggest public register of any profession in Wales, and the most wide-ranging of education professionals in the world.

As at 31 March 2026, there were 100,027 eligible to practise (91,357 individual registrants) education practitioners registered with us, across four different education sectors in Wales.

Category	Number of registrants	%
School learning support workers	40,578	44.4
School teachers	30,170	33.2
Further education teachers	3,873	4.2
Further education learning support workers	2,394	2.6
Work-based learning practitioners	2,279	2.5
Independent special post-16 institution learning support workers	289	0.3
Independent school teachers	1,707	0.1
Independent school learning support workers	1,247	1.9
Qualified youth support workers	562	1.4
Qualified youth workers	366	0.6
Principals and senior leaders	116	0.4
Adult learning practitioners	268	0.1
Independent special post-16 institution teachers	66	0.3
Multiple categories*	7,422	8.1
Total	91,357	100

*Some registrants are registered in more than one category.

The Code of Professional Conduct and Practice

Our Code of Professional Conduct and Practice (the Code) sets out the standards expected of those registered with us and is intended to support and guide their behaviours and judgements as professionals working in education and training roles in Wales.

The latest version of the Code came into force on 1 September 2025.

Registrants commit to upholding the six key principles of the Code:

1. Personal and Professional Responsibility
2. Professional Integrity
3. Collaborative Working
4. Leadership
5. Professional Knowledge and Understanding
6. Professional Learning

Failure to comply with the Code may call a practitioner's registration into question.

To give focus to the Code, specifically professional responsibilities and the use of social media, we have, during 2025-26:

- delivered 47 in-person and virtual presentations to registrants, employers, and other of our stakeholders across Wales
- reviewed our 14 good practice guides, designed to complement the Code and help support and guide registrant's behaviours and judgements

About fitness to practise

We have a statutory duty to investigate and hear cases involving our registrants where we are informed of their alleged misconduct or incompetence (discipline). We also decide whether or not education practitioners in Wales should be granted entry to the Register when they apply (suitability for registration), and are the appeals body for those school teachers who wish to appeal against a local authority's decision to fail their statutory induction period (induction appeals).

Our [Disciplinary Procedures and Rules](#), [Registration Rules](#), and [Guidance for the hearing of induction appeals](#) set out the procedures we follow in undertaking our work in these key areas. This includes our powers to impose Interim Suspension Orders (ISO) in specific circumstances.

Our regulatory year

Casework

Discipline

This year, we have:

- concluded 90 disciplinary cases
- held 12 Investigating Committees, where 78 cases were considered
- held 51 fitness to practise hearings
- imposed 43 disciplinary orders
- imposed 23 ISOs

Suitability for registration

This year, we have:

- assessed 268 applications for EWC registration where a declaration was made
- refused 6 applications for EWC registration where a declaration was made

Committees

As at 31 March 2026, our committee member pool consisted of 57 independent panel members.

All fitness to practise committees include at least one member who is practicing and registered in at least one of the 13 registration categories, and a lay member. A committee may also include a retired practitioner, or a former practitioner. A quorum is three.

One member is appointed as chair to a committee.

All panel members must attend refresher training annually to ensure their skills and knowledge are kept up to date.

No member of Council – which governs the work of the EWC – has any involvement in fitness to practise cases, nor do they sit on panels.

Disciplinary casework

Our disciplinary work relates to those education practitioners in Wales who are registered with us.

We are informed of concerns about them in a number of different ways, and from a number of different referral sources.

Most of the referrals we receive come from employers and involve allegations which could amount to unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence, and/or a conviction of a relevant offence.

Employers and private supply agencies have a statutory duty to refer a registrant to us where:

- a registrant is dismissed, or leaves employment prior to a possible dismissal (for example, due to a resignation or settlement agreement) (employers)
- an agency ceases to use the services of a registrant, or may have done so had the registrant not stopped providing those services (agents)

In both cases, the grounds for a referral are:

- misconduct; and/or
- professional incompetence; and/or
- conviction of a relevant offence

We also receive information from the following:

- police forces can make direct referrals to the EWC under common law police disclosure (CLPD)
- any individual or organisation can make a complaint to us about the alleged conduct or incompetence of a registrant
- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) sends us information for consideration on professional grounds where it decides not to include one of our registrants in the Children's Barred list – we cannot investigate any person who is DBS barred
- we can self-refer registrants where we become aware of information that we consider is in the public interest to investigate
- registrants are required by the Code to tell us of any conviction, caution, or restriction to which they are subject

As a regulator, our role is not to punish registrants where their conduct or performance brings their registration into question, but to safeguard learners, young people, parents/guardians, and to maintain public trust and confidence in the education workforce.

Investigations and hearings

Investigations

Most referrals we receive are investigated in private by independent panels called Investigating Committees¹.

An independent legal adviser sits with this committee to make sure the investigation is fair, but does not take part in the decision.

Investigating Committees decide whether or not the registrant involved has a case to answer, that is, whether or not there is a real prospect of first, a finding of fact, and second, unacceptable professional conduct², serious professional incompetence³, a conviction of relevant criminal offence⁴ being made by a fitness to practise committee at a hearing.

The real prospect test means there is a genuine (rather than a remote or fanciful) possibility that a committee, sitting at a hearing, will make such findings.

¹ We can close cases without investigating. For example, minor criminal offences, and conduct which is not capable of amounting to an allegation of unacceptable professional conduct, and/or serious professional incompetence.

² Conduct falling short of the standard expected of a registrant.

³ A level of competence falling seriously below that expected of a registrant, taking into account all the relevant circumstances.

⁴ A criminal offence which has material relevance to the person's fitness to be a registrant.

Hearings

A hearing is held when an Investigating Committee decides that a registrant has a case to answer. The registrant is invited to attend and/or be represented at the hearing.

There is a presumption all hearings will be held in public. However, there may be exceptional reasons why all, or part of some hearings are held in private.

Most of our hearings are now held virtually. However, the registrant involved can request an in-person hearing if they confirm they will attend, and/or be represented at the hearing.

Fitness to Practise Committees are independent panels that decide whether a practitioner's registration should remain in place, be suspended, or if that person should be removed from the Register. After considering all the evidence, including from witnesses, committees decide whether or not the facts of the allegations are proven. If so, it then determines whether this amounts to unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence, and/or a conviction of relevant criminal offence.

An independent legal adviser sits with this committee to make sure the hearing is fair, but does not take part in the decision.

Decisions open to the committee are as follows:

- facts not proved
- facts proved but not unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence, and/or a relevant offence
- unacceptable professional conduct, serious professional incompetence, and/or a relevant offence – no disciplinary order
- reprimand – recorded on the Register for two years
- conditional registration order – recorded on the Register for a period specified by the committee – if no period is set, this order will apply permanently
- suspension order – removed from the Register for a period specified by the committee (not exceeding two years) – conditions may be applied to a suspension order
- prohibition order – removed from the Register indefinitely – no application can be made for re-admission to the Register until at least two years have elapsed

Where a Fitness to Practise Committee decides a disciplinary order is appropriate and proportionate (other than an ISO), we [publish that decision on our website for six months](#) from the date of publishing.

We also make sure the practitioner's Register record reflects this decision.

A list of [live disciplinary orders is publicly available on our website](#).

Interim Suspension Orders (ISO)

If we are informed a registrant has been accused of serious misconduct, we may recommend to a committee that it imposes an ISO as an emergency measure. This is to protect learners, young people, and the public, whilst, for example, a police investigation is concluded. An ISO can be in place for up to 18 months.

We also hold ISO reviews to make sure that no such order is in place longer than is necessary and proportionate.

All hearings of this nature are held in private.

Summary data

The following information and data provide a high-level report of our disciplinary activity covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This covers investigations, hearings, and our ISO work, as described above.

Information and data about previous financial years is provided as a comparison.

Please note:

- since 2015, we have been responsible for registering and regulating 12 additional categories of registrant, across five new areas of education and training in Wales – the newest groups, from the further education principals/senior leaders, and adult learning practitioner groups are not currently represented in our data
- some registrants are registered in more than one category – for the purposes of this report, those practitioners are described as multiple category registrants
- we report on our ISO work separately to our investigations and hearings

Number of cases by outcome

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Concluded with no order imposed	27 (31%)	25 (35%)	28 (38%)	27 (36%)	38 (42%)
Reprimand	20	19	18	20	16
Conditional Registration Order	1	0	4	1	0
Suspension Order (no conditions)	4	2	2	1	8
Suspension Order (with conditions)	2	2	1	5	2
Prohibition Order	23	17	17	17	17
Application for eligibility following a Prohibition	3	0	1	0	2
DBS Barred before EWC concluded	6	5	3	5	6
Case closed – registrant deceased	0	0	0	0	1
Total	86	71	74	76	90

Of the 38 cases concluded with no order, five were concluded at hearing stage, 11 were considered as no case to answer by an investigating committee, and 22 related to minor convictions/did not meet the threshold for investigation and were closed as no further action

Number of cases by registrant category

Registrant group	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
School teachers	25	21	22	22	21
FE teachers	11	9	6	10	5
FE learning support workers	3	0	6	4	3
School learning support workers	21	21	26	29	45
Work-based learning practitioners	9	5	10	9	7
Independent school teachers	-	-	0	0	0
Independent school learning support workers	-	-	0	0	1
Independent special post-16 institution teachers	-	-	0	0	0
Independent special post-16 institution learning support workers	-	-	0	0	0
Youth support workers	1	0	0	0	2
Youth workers	0	0	0	1	1
Adult learning practitioners	-	-	-	0	0
FE Principals and senior leaders	-	-	-	0	0
Multiple registrant categories	16	15	4	1	5
Total	86	71	74	76	90

Of the 90 cases, 51 were considered at fitness to practise hearings, including two applications which related to readmission to the Register following a prohibition order. Both applications were refused.

Referral source – cases concluded

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Employer	73.3%	85.9%	71.3%	73.7%	69.7%
Police	10.5%	7.0%	13.8%	6.6%	13.5%
EWC referral	3.5%	0.0%	8.8%	6.6%	4.5%
Self-referral	11.6%	2.8%	6.3%	11.8%	12.4%
Other	1.2%	4.2%	0.0%	1.3%	0.0%

*Other includes complaints, referrals from the DBS, and other regulators.

ISO imposed

Registrant group	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
School teachers	1	5	9	9
FE teachers	0	0	2	0
FE learning support workers	0	0	0	2
School learning support workers	1	4	2	8
Work-based learning practitioners	0	0	0	2
Independent school teachers	-	0	1	0
Independent school learning support workers	-	0	0	0
Independent special post-16 institution teachers	-	0	0	0
Independent special post-16 institution learning support workers	-	0	0	0
Youth support workers	0	0	0	0
Youth workers	0	0	0	0
Adult learning practitioners	-	-	0	0
FE Principals and senior leaders	-	-	0	0
Multiple registrant categories	1	0	0	2
Total	3	9	14	23

2025-26 demographic data relating to gender, age, national identity, and ethnicity of those registrants subject to disciplinary proceedings, compared to the demographic of the Register

Please note that FtP cases means fitness to practise cases, and registered workforce is derived from the Register as at 31 March 2026.

Gender

	FtP cases	Registered workforce
Female	42.5%	78.5%
Male	57.5%	21.4%
Not specified	0.0%	0.1%

Age

	FtP cases	Registered workforce
Under 30	22.1%	21.9%
30 to 39	24.8%	23.8%
40 to 49	27.4%	24.8%
50 to 59	14.2%	21.1%
60+	11.5%	8.4%

National identity

	FtP cases	Registered workforce
Scottish/Irish/Northern Irish	0.0%	0.6%
Does not wish to record national identity	3.5%	0.8%
Other	3.5%	3.6%
English	4.4%	5.6%
Unknown	8.0%	7.8%
British	22.1%	27.8%
Welsh	58.4%	53.8%

Ethnic group

	FtP cases	Registered workforce
Unknown	8.0%	7.9%
Does not wish to record ethnic group	3.5%	1.4%
Other ethnic group	0.0%	0.6%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1.8%	1.1%
Asian/Asian British	0.0%	2.4%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	0.9%	1.1%
White	85.8%	85.5%

2025–26 demographic data about the Welsh language skills of those registrants subject to disciplinary proceedings, compared to the demographic of the Register

Welsh Language

When a practitioner applies to join our Register, they are asked to confirm whether or not they are able to speak through the medium of Welsh. A yes response means they are fluent, or fairly fluent in the language.

They are also asked to confirm whether they currently deliver, or are able to deliver education and training through the medium of Welsh.

In both cases, the responses are based on self-declaration.

Welsh-language speaker

	FtP cases	Registered workforce
Yes	20.4%	24.9%
No	72.6%	69.5%
Unknown	7.1%	5.6%

	FtP cases	Registered workforce
Yes	16.8%	20.2%
No	76.1%	74.1%
Unknown	7.1%	5.7%

Suitability for registration

Our suitability for registration work relates to those education practitioners in Wales who are applying for registration with us.

We assess suitability where an applicant makes a declaration when applying.

Prospective registrants are asked to answer a number of questions about their previous history when they apply. If an applicant answers yes to any question in the declaration, their application will be assessed by the fitness to practise team.

The onus is upon the applicant to demonstrate their suitability for registration with us.

Suitability assessments

Stage one: Where we consider the declaration made to be relatively minor, and that which would not affect the applicant's suitability for registration, we will grant registration.

Stage two: Where the applicant makes a declaration which does not fall under stage one, we will ask them to provide more detailed information about the circumstances of their declaration. This should include an explanation of their declaration, testimonials, and other representations in support of their suitability for registration. If we are reassured by the applicant's response, we will grant registration.

Stage three: Where we are minded not to grant registration at stage one or two, we will refer the application for independent scrutiny by a suitability committee at a private meeting. The applicant is invited to attend the meeting.

Suitability committee meetings

Our suitability committee meetings are held in private/virtually, and are an opportunity for the applicant to explain to an independent panel why they consider they are suitable to be registered with us.

Suitability committees are our independent panels which decide whether or not an applicant should be granted entry to our Register, based on their declaration. Under these procedures, it is the applicant who is responsible for persuading the committee that they are suitable by providing information and evidence.

If a committee decides that entry to the Register should be refused, the applicant is not eligible to make any further application in the same registration category/categories for 12 months.

An independent legal adviser sits with this committee to make sure the meeting is fair, but does not take part in the decision.

Summary data

The following information and data provide a high-level report of our suitability assessment activity covering 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. This covers all stages of our suitability for registration process.

Information and data about previous financial years is provided as a comparison.

Please note:

- since 2015, we have been responsible for registering and regulating 12 additional categories of registrant, across five sectors in education in Wales – the newest groups, from further education principals/senior leaders, and adult learning practitioner groups, are not currently represented in our data because no declarations have been made by applicants seeking registration in these new categories
- some practitioners are registered in more than one category – for the purposes of this report, those practitioners are described as multiple category registrants
- applications can be withdrawn/closed by both us and the applicant, for example, where an applicant fails to respond to our enquiries about the declaration they have made, we may discontinue our assessment. An applicant may also decide to withdraw their application at any time during the assessment process

Number of suitability assessments by outcome

Outcomes	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Application granted (Stage 1/2)	149 (81.4%)	159 (85.5%)	159 (72.9%)	148 (71.2%)	176 (65.7%)
Application granted (Stage 3)	10 (5.5%)	4 (2.2%)	8 (3.7%)	6 (2.9%)	11 (4.1%)
Application refused (Stage 3)	2 (1.1%)	4 (2.2%)	1 (0.5%)	3 (1.4%)	6 (2.2%)
Application withdrawn/closed	22 (12.0%)	19 (10.1%)	50 (22.9%)	51 (24.5%)	75 (28.0%)
Total	183	186	218	208	268

Number of suitability assessments by registrant category

Registrant group	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
School teachers	86	96	137	117	167
FE teachers	30	24	22	25	21
FE learning support workers	20	12	9	10	18
School learning support workers	6	7	8	12	7
Work-based learning practitioners	9	13	17	7	16
Independent school teachers	0	1	0	3	2
Independent school learning support workers	3	0	2	1	3
Independent special post-16 institution teachers	-	-	3	8	14
Independent special post-16 institution learning support workers	-	-	1	1	2
Youth support workers	-	-	0	0	0
Youth workers	-	-	0	1	0
Adult learning practitioners	-	-	-	0	0
FE Principals and senior leaders	-	-	-	0	0
Multiple registrant categories	29	33	19	23	18
Total	183	186	218	208	268

Declaration type 2025-26

Type of declaration made	Percentage
Conviction/Caution	46.6%
Other	53.4%

2025-26 demographic data relating to gender, age, national identity, and ethnicity of those applicants who have made declarations when applying for EWC registration, compared to the demographic of the Register

Please note, applicant means an application where a declaration was made, and registered workforce is derived from the Register as at 31 March 2026.

Gender

	Applicant	Registered workforce
Female	60.8%	78.5%
Male	39.2%	21.4%
Not specified	0.0%	0.1%

Age

	Applicant	Registered workforce
Under 30	27.5%	21.9%
30 to 39	28.7%	23.8%
40 to 49	19.0%	24.8%
50 to 59	16.0%	21.1%
60+	9.0%	8.4%

National identity

	Applicant	Registered workforce
Scottish/Irish/Northern Irish	0.4%	0.6%
Does not wish to record national identity	0.4%	0.8%
Other	2.2%	3.6%
English	7.8%	5.6%
Unknown	0.0%	7.8%
British	34.7%	27.8%
Welsh	54.5%	53.8%

Ethnic group

	Applicant	Registered workforce
Unknown	0.0%	7.9%
Does not wish to record ethnic group	0.7%	1.4%
Other ethnic group	0.7%	0.6%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	3.0%	1.1%
Asian/Asian British	0.4%	2.4%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	1.9%	1.1%
White	93.3%	85.5%

Induction appeals

We are the appeals body for those newly qualified teachers (NQTs) in Wales who:

- fail their statutory induction period
- have their statutory Induction period extended
- wish to appeal against those decisions, as made by the local authority involved

NQTs can request a further extension to their induction period as part of their appeal.

Any appeal needs to be made in writing within 20 working days of the local authority's decision.

Hearings

We will arrange an oral hearing if the NQT appealing requests it. The NQT attends and/or can be represented at the hearing, as do representatives for the local authority which made the decision.

There is a presumption all hearings will be held in public, however, there may be exceptional reasons why all, or part of some hearings are held in private.

As explained above, most of our hearings are now held virtually. However, the NQT appealing can request an in-person hearing if they confirm they will attend, and/or be represented at the hearing.

Induction appeals committees are our independent panels which decide whether or not the NQT's appeal should be allowed, or dismissed. In order to make that decision, the committee must first establish if, having heard all evidence from both parties:

- the NQT appealing failed to meet Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership
- the NQT appealing was subject to any defect in the induction process of sufficient importance so as to have seriously disadvantaged the NQT in meeting these standards
- there are any other special circumstances that justify the appeal being allowed or the induction period being extended

An independent legal adviser sits with this committee to make sure the hearing is fair, but does not take part in the decision.

Summary data

In 2025–26, no induction appeals were received or concluded by us.

Our regulatory year ahead

During 2026–27, we will:

- recruit additional panel members in order to maintain a complement that allows the effective administration of our casework
- continue to develop the fairness and efficiency of our regulatory function by reviewing our disciplinary and registration rules – both may involve some form of consultation
- continue work on developing a range of online material and resources including a number of information videos which inform the public about this area of our work and to assist and support all parties involved in FtP casework
- continue to deliver training to a range of different audiences – current and future registrants, employers, agents, and other key stakeholders about the Code

