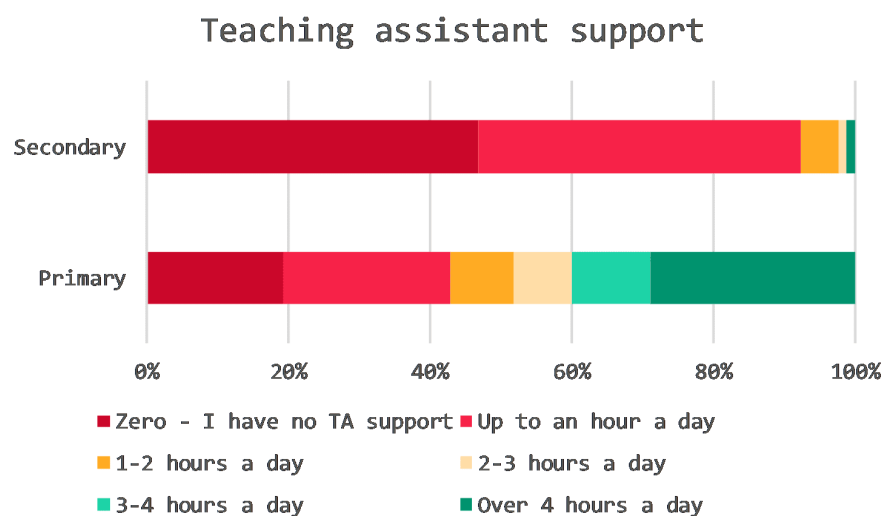
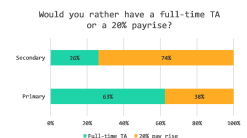


Teaching assistants and pay rises

It is hard to imagine a primary school operating without its teaching assistants. Except for those teachers who are old enough to remember when they did! For most of her teaching career, I remember my mum teaching years R-3 (in a first school) without another adult in the room. Life is quite different in secondary schools, where half our Teacher Tapp panel currently have no teaching assistant in any of their classes and the vast majority of the rest see one for just one lesson a day.

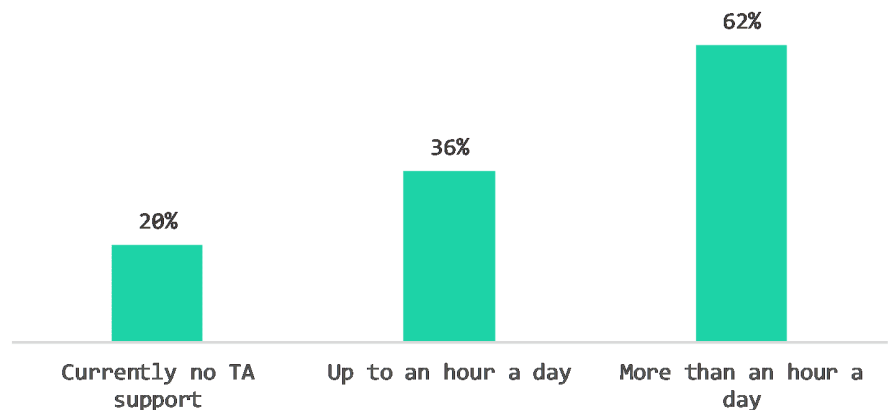


So, it is perhaps no surprise that when we asked our panel whether they would prefer a full-time teaching assistant or a 20% pay rise, the split between sectors was stark.



As the chart below shows, those who have a TA in their class mostly wouldn't give them up for more money (although some would). And only 20% of those who don't currently have a TA would forego a huge 20% pay rise to acquire one. Economists and psychologists call this phenomenon 'loss aversion': the disutility of giving up an object is greater than the utility associated with acquiring it.

Those preferring a full-time TA over a 20% pay rise



We'd love to ask some more questions about why some teachers value TAs more highly than others. If you have any ideas then leave them [here](#). We have had a quick look at whether inexperienced teachers value TAs more, but cannot see obvious patterns. I'm sure the cost of employing a TA to a school is well in excess of a 20% pay rise for most of our panel. Perhaps we'll ask how many would still want the TA if we offered a 40 or 60% pay rise!

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