

Update on SNCT Working Groups 12 March 2012

Conditions of Service Working Group

The Conditions of Service Working Group has continued its work on the Pay and Conditions Agreement 2011. There are ongoing issues relating to the calculation of leave during maternity and the Working Group has considered worked examples. It is recognised that this requires to be completed as quickly as practicable.

The Working Group has considered the provision of compensatory leave and the unintended consequences on this provision arising from the introduction of days of school closure. Discussion is continuing on this matter.

There has been agreement to resurrect a technical working group to look at leave and pay calculations. It is the expectation that this group will assist a greater consistency of practice.

The Working Group has agreed in principle to provide occupational leave for surrogate partners. It is recognised that there is no extant statutory provision and therefore no basis to provide statutory pay during leave. This is still being considered.

Finally, the Working Group has amended the Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure to take account of the amount of the removal of Statutory Dispute Resolution Regulations 2004. The Working Group will have to consider the decision of GTCS to replace the Code of Practice on Teacher Competence by the Framework on Teacher Competence.

Review of LNCTs Working Group

The Review of LNCTs Working Group has principally dealt with monitoring the Pay and Conditions Agreement 2011. The Group developed a questionnaire to elicit information as the key part of the Agreement and this was sent out to all LNCTs. At the time of preparing this Report 29 responses had been received.

The principal findings from the questionnaire are appended separately for the SNCT.

Questionnaire - <http://www.snct.org.uk/library/1415/JS-12-34%20Pay%20and%20Conditions%20-%20Monitoring%20Form.pdf>

Findings - <http://www.snct.org.uk/library/1452/LNCT%20Questionnaire%20Findings.pdf>

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The Working Group has also considered the SNCT website. The SNCT will have discussions with Union Digital on the maintenance of the website with a view to taking over this maintenance.

Report of the Review of LNCTs Working Group

The Working Group has conducted a survey on the implementation of the Pay and Conditions Agreement 2011. 32 Councils responded and the Working Group was grateful for this volume of response.

The group will return at its next meeting to the issue of conservation and steps which may be taken to mitigate the impact of the loss of lifetime conservation. The group will consider a questionnaire to elicit further information on how this is being managed locally.

The group noted that the survey set out concerns over supply in a number of Council areas. The group agreed that qualitative evidence was required and the Joint Secretaries were asked to issue a supplementary questionnaire to seek additional information from LNCTs. At its next meeting the group will consider a more detailed random sample survey of headteachers and supply teachers.

The group noted issues relating to the working year. Which would be referred to the Conditions of Service Working Group.

It was also noted that the Joint Secretaries had scheduled a meeting with GTCS on 21 March at which the issue of advice relating to probationers on the Induction Scheme would be discussed.

The Working Group also was advised that no date had been set for a meeting between Joint Secretaries and Union Digital on the management and future development of the SNCT Website.

Report of the SNCT Joint Chairs Working Group on Duties

The Working Group has met on 3 occasions and agreed the following remit:

- to review current provisions contained in the SNCT Handbook in light of the recommendation from the Review of Teacher Employment regarding teachers' duties
- to hold an early meeting with GTCS to discuss the relationship between duties and Standards
- to provide an interim report to the SNCT Joint Chairs by the end of February
- to provide a report with recommendations to SNCT Joint Chairs detailing possible changes alongside benefits and risks by autumn 2012 with a view to allow discussion on changes to the SNCT Handbook to be concluded by the SNCT before 1 April 2013, when the current SNCT Pay and Conditions Agreement ends, with a view to implementation by August 2013

Representatives of the Working Group met the GTCS to explore the differences between professional standards and contractual duties. Representatives of GTCS attended a full meeting of the Working Group.

The Working Group has concentrated on McCormac Recommendation 1 on duties and has worked on the distinction between professional standards, overarching professional obligations and specific professional duties. Each constituent group worked up examples of how this would be set out and the Joint Secretaries have been asked to try to develop a paper covering the main points.

The Working Group has considered McCormac Recommendation 3 on the removal of Annex E but has not progressed work on this recommendation at this stage.

Report of the SNCT Joint Chairs Working Group on Working Week / Working Hours

The Working Group has met on 3 occasions.

The remit of the Working Group was agreed as follows:

- To review current provision contained in the SNCT handbook in light of the recommendations from the Review of Teacher Employment regarding proposed changes to the working week / working hours of teachers.
- To engage with stakeholders if necessary with regard to any related matters.
- To produce an interim report to the SNCT Joint Chairs by end of February.
- To provide a report with recommendations to SNCT Joint Chairs detailing possible changes alongside benefits and risks by Autumn 2012 with a view to allow discussion on changes to the SNCT Handbook to be concluded by the SNCT before 1 April 2013, when the current SNCT Pay and Conditions Agreement ends, with a view to implementation by August 2013.

The Working Group agreed to address the recommendations as three groups which identified different themes. The Working Group has had wide ranging discussion on all the recommendations within it's' remit and progress has been made as follows:

Group 1

Rec 13 – Joint Secs to write to LNCTs. Response by 27 March.

Rec 22 – Agreed

Rec 24 – Relates to 13.

Rec 25 – Agreed.

Rec 26 – Agreed subject to the outcome of discussion on flexibility.

Rec 27 – Relates to 13.

Group 2

Rec 23 – Action TBC.

Rec 28 – Joint Secs to redraft statement.

Rec 34 – Joint Secs to redraft removing the final sentence and ‘in the future’.

Group 3

Rec 8 – Joint Secs to clarify through a letter of advice.

Rec 14: Action TBC.

The Working Group has had wide ranging discussion on the 11 recommendations, particularly focusing on the potential risks and benefits of increased flexibility provided by recommendations 13 and 27 which suggest looking at class contact time over a longer period than a week.

Negotiations and discussions will continue over the Summer and a further report will be brought back to the next SNCT.

Report of the SNCT Joint Chairs Working Group on Chartered Teacher

The Working Group met for the first time on 6 March and agreed the following remit:

- to consider the pay and terms and conditions of chartered teachers, and those working towards chartered status, together with the code of practice on the role of chartered teachers further to the decision to end the scheme.
- to engage stakeholders if necessary with regard to any related matters.
- to provide an interim report to the SNCT Joint Chairs by end of March 2012 to allow guidance to be issued on the existing freeze on entry to the scheme.
- To produce a final report with recommendations to SNCT Joint Chairs setting out a possible way forward by June 2012

The Working Group has had an initial discussion about the implications of discontinuing the Chartered Teacher Scheme as recommended at Recommendation 19. It was agreed that more information on the make-up of the chartered teacher workforce (including data on the number of teachers progressing towards the standard) was required along with an indication from the course providers as to the number of teachers they expect to undertake courses. The Scottish Government will collate and circulate this information in advance of the next meeting of the Working Group which will take place on 27 March.