

21 December 2015

JS/15/62**Pay and Conditions Agreement 2015 - 17 – Working Time Agreements – Managing Teacher Workload**

Dear Colleague

The SNCT Support Group met on 26 November 2015 and asked the Joint Secretaries to remind LNCTs of the above agreement which is contained in the Handbook of Conditions of Service at Part 2 Appendix 2.18 and is also appended to this letter.

LNCTs are asked to draw this agreement and in particular the extracts reproduced below, to the attention of each school in their area to ensure that workload issues are taken into account during discussions on the preparation of individual Working Time Agreements for the 2016/17 school year.

Extracts from Appendix 2.18 – Managing Teacher Workload:

The SNCT seeks to control workload through the 35 hour working week. The SNCT has issued previous guidance on Working Time Agreements (JS/05/08) and the management of workload. The SNCT requires schools' negotiating committees to conclude written Working Time Agreements, subject to guidance provided by each LNCT. Working Time Agreements should provide the context to undertake the collegiate activities set out in the SNCT Handbook (Appendix 2.7) and should also inform the targets, time and resources in a School Improvement Plan...School improvement plans should set out agreed actions to reduce bureaucracy and tackle workload.

Review and Evaluation should be robust, evaluative and supportive and should build on professional self-evaluation, through a collegiate approach. The impact of curriculum change should be fully reviewed and evaluated by all stakeholders before being subject to further change. Schools should review and evaluate on a regular basis each session's Working Time Agreement to inform negotiations on the Working Time Agreement for the session ahead.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Tom Young (Employers' Side)
Drew Morrice (Teachers' Panel)
Stephanie Walsh (Scottish Government)

Joint Secretaries

COSLA
Verity House
19 Haymarket Yards
EDINBURGH
EH12 5BH
T: 0131 474 9200
F: 0131 474 9292
E: tomy@cosla.gov.uk

Teachers' Panel
46 Moray Place
Edinburgh
EH3 6BH
T: 0131 225 6244
F: 0131 220 3151
E: dmorrice@eis.org.uk

Scottish Government Learning Directorate
2A South Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ
T: 0131 244 0230
F: 0131 244 0957
E: stephanie.walsh@gov.scot

PART 2

APPENDIX 2.18

Working Time Agreements – Managing Teacher Workload

The Tackling Bureaucracy Report in November 2013 asked the SNCT and LNCTs to “consider the outcome of the Group’s work in the context of their existing role.”

The SNCT recognised the main drivers of excessive bureaucracy in the Report and commits to strengthen extant mechanism to control teacher workload. The SNCT will share on its website examples of practice taken by some local authorities and LNCTs to tackle workload at local level – such examples will inform discussions across the LNCTs.

The SNCT agreed the Statement of Teacher Professionalism (Part 2: Appendix 2.6), that the focus on teaching and learning is about empowering teachers to improve outcomes for learners. This approach brings real benefits and at a local level we need to guard against too much paperwork and overly complex processes which get in the way of teaching and learning. Everyone has a part to play in tackling excessive workload which is:

Anything that makes it impossible for teaching staff to complete their duties within the 35 hour week.

The SNCT seeks to control workload through the 35 hour working week. The SNCT has issued previous guidance on Working Time Agreements (JS/05/08) and the management of workload. The SNCT requires schools’ negotiating committees to conclude written Working Time Agreements, subject to guidance provided by each LNCT. Working Time Agreements should provide the context to undertake the collegiate activities set out in the SNCT Handbook (Appendix 2.7) and should also inform the targets, time and resources in a School Improvement Plan.

The SNCT wishes to discourage unnecessary bureaucracy. School improvement plans should set out agreed actions to reduce bureaucracy and tackle workload. The impact of changes made should be evaluated by LNCTs and reported to the SNCT which may offer supplementary advice. The SNCT shall report its findings to the CFE Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy.

Each LNCT will have agreed monitoring mechanisms on Working Time Agreements.

This guidance offers further advice about local approaches to managing workload.

In preparing a Working Time Agreement Schools require to consider:

- (i) The time available for collegiate activities within the 35 hour working week.
- (ii) The School Improvement Plan.
- (iii) The lessons arising from the current WTA.

Collectively we have a duty of care to staff and learners, and recommend the following best practice principles. These principles should inform future practice in all schools and should be used when reviewing current practice.

Key Principles

- a. Acknowledging the **professionalism of teachers** to meet the needs of young people for whom we have professional responsibility and to manage their own workload. Working relationships based upon shared responsibility, mutual respect and understanding should inform the management of workload.
- b. **Professional dialogue** is key to improving learning and managing workload. Paperwork should be kept to the minimum required to support this. Time should be set aside to facilitate this important process.
- c. **Curriculum Planning** planning should be proportionate and based on agreed policy guidance and capacity to deliver. Agreement about planning should be reached through consultation and

negotiation. LNCTs should monitor the implementation of school curriculum planning and annually consider opportunities for change and improvement.

- d. **Documentation** should be concise and relevant, and allow scope for flexibility within a clear framework, subject to controlling workload demands.
- e. **Monitoring and reporting** systems must be fit-for-purpose. Reports should be relevant and meaningful for learners and parents/carers, and prepared by staff within agreed allocations of time.
- i. **IT systems** and software should support effective learning and teaching and their use should be guided by the principles of:
 - ii. Continuity,
 - iii. Accessibility,
 - iv. Ease-of-use,
 - v. Removal of duplication

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Working Time Agreements are developed and agreed at a School level, in advance of each academic session. The Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers will have oversight to ensure the principles as set out in this guidance are implemented and should consider approaches to annually sampling the Working Time Agreements.

There needs to be a collective effort to ensure workload is manageable within the 35 hour working week.