

## **DNCT/29**

### **WORKLOAD**

#### **1. Background**

The 2013 Report of the Curriculum for Excellence Working Group on Tackling Bureaucracy, and the follow-up Report in 2015, identified the main drivers of excessive workload in schools, and areas where changes need to be made. The Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) recognises the main drivers of excessive bureaucracy in the Report and is committed to strengthening extant mechanisms to control teacher workload.

Workload control mechanisms form an integral part of the Pay and Conditions of Service Agreement 2015 – 2015 (SNCT circular 15/54).

This agreement seeks to control teacher workload through the 35-hour working week and the mechanisms that Schools and Local authorities use to negotiate and agree teacher workload.

#### **2. Introduction**

The SNCT defines excessive workload as: 'Anything that makes it impossible for teaching staff to complete their duties within the 35 hour week.' (SNCT Handbook Part 2 Appendix 2.18 Working Time Agreements - Managing Teacher Workload).

The SNCT seeks to control workload through the 35 hour working week. 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. All parties in the DNCT agree with this approach and have set out the following guidance to help schools reduce excessive workload.

#### **3. Key Principles**

Collegiality and school based consultation and negotiating mechanisms will be the key principles in resolving excessive teacher workload and fulfil the terms of the Pay and Conditions of Service Agreement for 2015 -2017.

#### **4. School Improvement Plans**

The impact of change should be reviewed and evaluated by all stakeholders before the curriculum is subject to any further change. Areas for development set out in school or department plans should be costed in terms of time as well as resources. Developments must be set out in the school's Working Time Agreement and all activities should be capable of being undertaken within the allocated time. School Improvement Plans must set out agreed actions to reduce bureaucracy and tackle workload.

#### **5. Working Time Agreements**

The school Working Time Agreement is an important means of controlling and limiting workload. The Code of Practice on Working Time Arrangements, set out in Appendix 2.7 of the SNCT Handbook, requires agreement to be reached within each educational establishment through the school's consultative machinery. DNCT 4

contains specific advice on reaching agreement at school level and on reducing workload and bureaucracy. Working Time agreements require account to be taken of school improvement plans.

### **Collegiate Calendars**

The School Collegiate calendar must set out when organised collegiate activity will take place in a school year. The principals behind setting out a collegiate calendar are to be clear and transparent on how the negotiated collegiate hours are to be used. In doing so duplication and overloading of the week can be avoided. The Calendar should also be used to show where time is available to teachers to undertake activities that do not require their colleagues.

## **6. Mechanisms for Review**

While the DNCT can set out mechanisms to assist and manage workload, each teacher has a responsibility to examine workload demands critically, to exercise professional judgement on workload issues and to raise concerns when demands are unreasonable.

Schools should ensure that there are effective mechanisms in place for dealing with workload concerns. The DNCT recommends using the WTA committee as the forum to discuss all matters that relate to teacher terms of service.

School leaders and other promoted staff have a direct influence on the workload of teachers and have a responsibility to work collegiately to tackle bureaucracy and reduce workload.

Wider bureaucracy and workload concerns will be raised at the DNCT, and addressing these will be integral to its continued annual monitoring of Working Time Agreements and School Improvement plans.

## **7. Workload Control Plan**

The DNCT recognises that there are three factors that will work together to tackle excessive teacher workload; the School Improvement Plan (SIP); the Working Time Agreement (WTA) and the Collegiate Calendar.

Accordingly, the DNCT has decided that all three must be created in a collegiate fashion and agreed by the school's Working Time Agreement Committee. Details on how to form a WTA committee are found in DNCT 4.

Before the Easter Break the School's, WTA Committee must meet to review the current SIP and WTA, identify workload drivers, establish school based solutions to these workload drivers and review the effectiveness of current actions being taken to reduce workload.

During the summer term, the WTA Committee must evaluate the needs of the SIP for the coming year and agree the school's WTA.

The SIP must identify specific actions on the reduction of workload and bureaucracy. The school's WTA Committee must agree these.

The Schools Collegiate Calendar must be agreed and published by the school Working time agreement committee before the summer break.