

TIME BUDGETING

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance is based on provisions set out in the Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987, as amended by the Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment (Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1988; and The Working Time Regulations 1988 (as amended).
- 1.2 This guidance has been developed to provide a framework for Principals and Boards of Governors to ensure the allocation and distribution of duties to all Principals, Vice Principals and teachers is managed in a fair and reasonable manner that enables staff to observe their contractual requirements with sufficient time to enjoy a reasonable work/life balance.
- 1.3 The Principal is responsible for determining a time budget to each member of the teaching staff, giving due regard to the individual responsibilities of each teacher. The Principal should seek to agree with each teacher the range of activities/duties which that teacher will undertake and the amount of time which that teacher will spend on each of these. The time budget should be distributed prior to the commencement of the teaching year.

2. The Legal Position

- 2.1 The 1987 Regulations, Schedule 3, paragraph 4 on working time states the following terms and conditions for teachers, Vice Principals and Principals:
- a. A full-time teacher, other than a teacher employed in a residential establishment, shall be available for work on 195 days in any year, of which not more than 190 days should involve teaching children in a classroom situation.
 - b. A teacher, other than a teacher employed in a residential establishment, shall be available to perform such duties at such times and such places as may reasonably be specified by the Principal, or where he is employed by a board on terms under which he is not assigned to any one school by the board or the Principal of any school in which he may be for the time being be required to work as a teacher, for 1265 hours in any year exclusive of time spent off school premises in preparing and marking lessons and time spent travelling to and from the place of work.
 - c. A teacher may not be required to teach as distinct from supervise children in a classroom situation for more than 25 hours in any week in a primary or special school and 23.5 hours in any week in a secondary school.
 - d. Unless employed under a separate contract as a mid-day supervisor, a teacher shall not be required to undertake mid-day supervision.
 - e. Subject to paragraph (f) all teachers shall be required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.00pm.
 - f. Teachers in nursery schools and in nursery units in primary schools shall be required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.30pm.

- g.** For the purposes of this paragraph a ‘year’ means a period of 12 months commencing on 31st July and a ‘week’ means a period of 7 days commencing on a Sunday.

2.2 Under Schedule 1 of the Regulations the Principal, as part of her/his professional duties is responsible for “deploying and managing all teaching and non-teaching staff of the school and allocating particular duties to them (including such duties of the Principal as may properly be delegated to the Vice Principal or other members of the staff), in a manner consistent with their terms and conditions of employment, maintaining a reasonable balance for each employee”.

3. Directed Time

3.1 The 1265 hours per year which a teacher is required to be available to work is generally referred to as ‘directed time’ and is split up into a number of elements, as follows:

a. Class Contact Time

It is acknowledged that the weekly limits of 23.5 hours in a secondary school and 25 hours in a primary or special school will include any time a teacher is involved in class cover (TNC 2011/8 Appendix I).

b. Supervision – Teaching Staff

Supervision occurs when a teacher is asked to engage in activities outside of the classroom where there is no active teaching taking place. Supervision may include tasks such as morning and afternoon breaks, wet break times, arrangements for the arrival and departure of pupils, bus supervision, school assembly, examinations etc. Where a teacher is not required to supervise at morning or afternoon break, or where this is done on a rota basis, this period must still be defined as directed time.

It is recognised that classroom supervision is not an effective use of a teacher’s time however, in exceptional circumstances, a teacher may be required to supervise, as distinct from teach, the class of an absent colleague.

c. Non-Teaching Days

Full time teachers are required to be available for work on 195 days per year, of which at least 5 are non-teaching days. These five days must also be accounted for within the 1265 hours.

d. Teaching Allowance and Special Educational Needs Allowance Duties

Some teachers will be in receipt of Teaching Allowances or Special Educational Needs Allowances for specific duties. These duties must also be allowed for within the time budget of 1265 hours, taking cognisance of the guidance on cover arrangements (TNC 2011/8 Appendix I).

e. Other Professional Duties

There is a range of other professional activities that go on regularly within schools. If a teacher is expected to carry out any duty that is deemed reasonable and in balance with the duties allocated to colleagues, then it must also be accounted for in the time budget. Due attention must be paid to ensure that there is work/life balance, in line with the Strategy for Teacher Health and Wellbeing in Northern Ireland (TNC 2011/1), particularly where a teacher volunteers to take on additional duties on an unremunerated basis.

- 3.2.** A teacher's directed time of 1,265 hours per year is the basic legal requirement for a teacher to satisfy his/her contractual obligations. A teacher cannot be directed to undertake duties beyond 1,265 hours on 195 days. However, schools have always been dependent on a commitment from teachers beyond the legal minimum requirement and this guidance does not change this. Schools would, for example, find it impossible to include within a teacher's 1,265 hours all of the time currently given by teachers to such activities as games, drama, music and school trips. Nevertheless, the extent of this commitment is for each teacher to determine for himself or herself. Teachers should be given reasonable notice before being directed to undertake evening duties.
- 3.3.** Principals cannot direct teachers to take pupils on educational visits involving overnight stays. Where this takes place on a voluntary basis it is a matter of negotiation between the teacher and the Principal as to the amount of directed time which will be allocated to this activity out of the annual time budget. This should include an appropriate allocation of time for the organisation of such visits.
- 3.4.** The 5 non-teaching days of a teacher's 195 working days shall be "reasonably contiguous" with days which involve teaching pupils.

4. Contingency Time

- 4.1** It is recommended that each teacher's time budget includes an element of contingency time to ensure there is flexibility to accommodate situations that may arise and are unaccounted for within the time budget.

5. Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time

- 5.1** The intended purpose of planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time is to enable teachers to raise standards through individual or collaborative professional activity and improve teachers' work/life balance. PPA time has the potential to impact positively on the twin aims of raising standards and tackling teacher workload.
- 5.2** The practice of teachers carrying out their planning, preparation and assessment outside of their normal teaching hours, and in isolation from each other, is not considered satisfactory by the Teachers' Negotiating Committee and in 2009 the Teachers' Negotiating Committee issued a joint policy statement on the Introduction of Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time (TNC 2009/8). This Statement advised that Principals and Boards of Governors should evaluate the potential to

introduce PPA time for all teachers in their school and attempt to timetable and guarantee this time where possible.

6. Disputes

- 6.1** It is hoped that this guidance will avoid disputes in relation to teachers' time budgets. Any teacher who has a concern or fails to reach agreement on their time budget should raise the matter, in the first instance with the Principal. If necessary the teacher should seek support from their recognised trade union to resolve the situation. It is hoped that such issues will be resolved without recourse to formal procedures. In circumstances, however where a teacher is not satisfied with the outcome the Grievance Procedure for Teachers (TNC 2008/3) may be used.