



Advice Note

Understanding Time Budgets

This Advice Note is to help teacher members understand their entitlements and what to do if they have concerns about workload.

All teachers in NI should have an agreed time budget in place by the end of October 2020 – that deadline has now passed!

Time Budgets are a key part of the 2020 Pay and Workload Agreement where all parties agree to a series of measures to address teacher concerns about workload and accountability.

Key Point of the Agreement are:

Teachers' Hours (Directed Time) are:

- **195 days** per year (non-teaching days should be reasonably contiguous with teaching days) and
- no more than **190 days teaching children**
- up to **1,265 hours per year**.

Class Contact Time is:

- part of Directed Time
- up to **23.5 hours per week** (post primary) (**893 hours per annum**) and
- **includes of cover**.

Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA):

- Directed Time includes time set aside for PPA
- The Pay & Workload Agreement **guarantees** that **10% of Directed Time (126.5 Hours per annum)** is set aside for PPA
- Dedicated PPA time enables teachers to raise standards through individual and collaborative professional activity.

For further advice contact 028 9078 2020 or ni@neu.org.uk

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a time budget?

Every teacher must be provided, through consultation with their principal, an agreed, individual time budget which incorporates all their tasks, duties, and responsibilities.

Everything you are directed to do must be reasonable and capable of being carried out during normal contractual hours (1265) i.e. within the working day (Directed Time).

This is confirmed by TNC 2020/1 Advice on Developing Directed Time Budgets.

Q. Should I have my own individual time budget.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure a Directed Time budget is prepared for, and gives due regard to, the individual responsibilities of each teacher in their school.

Principals and each individual member of staff should seek agreement on a teacher's Directed Time budget.

Q. What are the main provisions?

- Directed time begins from the moment teachers are directed to be in school.
- Morning break is included in Directed Time because you can be directed to cover.
- Lunch is not included in Directed Time. (30 mins between 12.00pm - 2.00pm/2.30pm)
- A teacher shall not be required to undertake mid-day supervision.
- Timetabled travel within a split campus is Directed Time.
- An available teacher can only be called upon to provide cover within their max. teaching hours in any one week.
- All teaching allowance duties are contained within the DTB 1265 hrs.
- All teachers must be allocated 10% PPA within their DTB.
- A teacher cannot be directed to take pupils on overnight trips.

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Principals and each member of staff should seek to reach agreement on a teacher's Directed Time budget; teachers do not have freedom to decide for themselves how they allocate their time.

Principals should plan the use of teachers' hours carefully in conjunction with the school improvement priorities, the school calendar, and the annual schedule of meetings.

If they do not, there could be a danger that staff will exhaust their obligatory hours before the end of the school day.

Q. When should individuals expect to have their time budgets?

From the introduction of the **Workload Agreement in 2011** there has been an onus on principals to provide teachers with a time budget each year.

This has been largely ignored and **as part of the 2020 pay agreement unions insisted that, with the inclusion of 10% PPA, management needed to train principals so that they could fulfil this requirement.**

Time Budgets were supposed to be sorted and in place before the end of August but because of COVID-19, there was a request from management side that the requirement to have them in place at the beginning of the year be held back until Hallowe'en.

All the teaching unions agreed this on the understanding that schools would temporarily revert to a maximum 32.4-hour weekly timetable with each day being viewed as lasting for no longer than 6.5 hours and include this calculation in all time budgets.

Q. Can you explain the 1265 hours, what does this mean to me as a teacher?

Full time teachers are contracted to work 195 days in the year up to a maximum of 1265 hours and all tasks/duties are to be included in the 1265 hours.

Look at the Time Budget alongside the school calendar – starts on 1 August

Part-time teachers work **pro-rata** of the 1265hrs/195 days.

Q. Regarding part time staff. A simple pro rata of some aspects of the time budget does not necessarily reflect a fair allocation. E.g. a teacher working 4 days a week may still do 100% of PPA and marking, parents' consultations and reports for those classes?

Time budgets for part time staff should be given their due consideration in terms of the reality and often unique scenarios they find themselves in.

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In some cases, part time teachers (say, on a 4-day week) get a **full teaching allowance** allocation on grounds that they can do 100% of the promotional role, notwithstanding being in school 80% of the time.

Q. Will Principals and Vice-Principals have individual bespoke Directed Time Budgets?

Mindful of the **health and well-being of principals and vice principals**, the TNC has agreed to undertake a review of the workload impact on school leaders as one of the nine work streams within the Teachers' Agreement. This will examine current practices and the impact on the workload of Principals and Vice-Principals.

Therefore, vice-principals do not have a Directed Time budget at this time.

In the meantime, you are encouraged to manage your time in collaboration with the senior leadership team and board of governors.

Teaching principals are encouraged to **fully utilise the principal release days**.

Q. Should the 1265 hours include marking for external qualifications such as BTEC and GCSE?

Simply yes, if marking pupils' work is considered part of the duties associated with a particular subject then the time used **must be included** in your 1265.

If the amount of marking is extremely heavy, then the school may need reduce the 23½ hours contact time to accommodate marking intensive courses.

Q. Could you differentiate between directed time and teaching, cover etc.? Are things like registration counted?

The 1,265 hours per year, which a teacher is required to be available to work is split up into several elements:

- **Class contact time**
- **Supervision**
- **Non-teaching days** (Staff Development Days)
- **Teaching Allowance and Special Educational Needs Allowance duties**
- **Planning, Preparation and Assessment** (PPA); and
- **Other professional duties** including attendance at assembly, conducting registration of pupils, participation in extra-curricular activities, attendance on residential trips, and participation in evening meetings.

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The Pay Agreement states:

Registration is included in Directed Time. If a teacher is required to deliver learning or pastoral work, this period of time is considered to be class contact time in the time budget.

Registration is therefore included in Directed Time if a teacher is **required to deliver learning or pastoral** work during registration – as is then part of the teacher's weekly limit of 23.5hrs.

So, pastoral teaching is class contact time and is distinct from registration of pupil attendance.

Effective pastoral teaching may include occasions where teachers follow an agreed pastoral programme, engage directly with pupils and monitor progress.

If you record this period of time (8.45am – 9.00am) in the Directed Time budget as non-class contact time teachers can be expected to do no more than register attendance and supervise the class.

However, if this 15 mins is classified as class contact time, this provides an opportunity for a more enriched engagement with the pupils.

Every minute from the time a teacher is directed to be in school until the end of the school day, apart from a teacher's lunch which is unpaid, is included in a directed time budget.

If a school has a timetabled registration period which lasts no longer than five minutes, and the teacher is expected to do nothing more than call a roll, then this dedicated five-minute registration period should be deemed as supervision.

If the timetabled registration period is longer than five minutes and a teacher is required to carry out any duty that could be described as pastoral then this period, irrespective of its length, is considered to be contact time and is included as part of a teacher's 23½ hours contact time.

Q. Can time before school begins count towards hours?

A directed time budget starts from the minute you are directed to be in school by the principal - including time before the pupils start their day.

Q. Can supervision duty be allocated by the principal after normal home time other than seeing pupils off the premises safely e.g. homework clubs, detention etc?

A principal can ask a teacher to supervise or participate in an after-school homework clubs or extra-curricular activities, but a teacher can simply decline the request as they are under no obligation to do so.

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If you '**volunteer**' it is **voluntary** – but if you are '**directed**' by the **Principal**, then it is '**directed time**'

Detention is also voluntary, but it is our view that as a professional duty that is important and we would **encourage members** to comply with detention requests as they are important to the smooth running of the school.

Detention rotas must be administered in a fair, transparent and equitable manner.

Q. Can a teacher be asked to undertake an activity in addition to those accounted for within their Directed Time Budget e.g. after school activity?

If the Principal directs a teacher to offer an **After-School Activity** this must be included in the teacher's Directed Time budget.

If a teacher offers to take an After-School Activity, this is voluntary and does not have to be recorded in a teacher's Directed Time budget.

Where a teacher is involved in an extra-curricular activity that is paid as a **separate contract**, this is not recorded in the teacher's Directed Time budget.

Teachers cannot be directed 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 Principal and the teacher as to the amount of Directed Time that will be allocated to this activity out of the annual Directed Time budget.

Q. What is PPA time?

The 2020 pay agreement guarantees that 10% of a teacher's Directed Time (i.e. 126½ hours per annum) is set aside for **Planning, Preparation and Assessment** (PPA).

This dedicated PPA time will enable a teacher to raise standards through individual and collaborative professional activity.

This then translates to **10% of 1265 hours = 126 ½ hours** left aside for PPA – over 195 days.

Dedicated PPA time enables teachers to continue to raise standards through their own individual and collaborative activities.

Q. What do you do if your principal vastly underestimated your 126.5 minimum allocation and if you dispute the time allocated within the budget what is the resolution mechanism?

The **10% is a minimum** and for a full-time teacher should be at least 126.5hrs.

The training delivered by the EA to principals stressed that the principal should meet with each teacher to discuss their time budget and endeavour to negotiate an agreed time budget.

The EA outlined that this may take more than one meeting for some teachers and this should be accommodated.

It is important to reiterate that the purpose of a Directed Time Budget is to ensure a health and wellbeing focus where all tasks, contingency time, duties, and responsibilities are included.

The Pay & Workload Agreement, April 2020, guarantees that 10% of a teacher's Directed Time (i.e. 126½ hours per annum) is set aside for Planning, Preparation and Assessment.

This dedicated PPA time is designed to enable a teacher to raise standards through individual and collaborative professional activity.

Jordanstown - The Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987, in regard to working time, states that a teacher shall be available to perform such duties at such times and such places as may reasonably be specified by the Principal.

School managements should ensure that a teacher's PPA time is not **eroded by demands** and should be kept available for teachers to individually prepare, work, plan, mark and meet collaboratively with their colleagues.

PPA is non-class contact time. It is dedicated time to enable a teacher to individually prepare, work, plan, mark and meet collaboratively with their colleagues.

By its very nature then, this cannot take place during a teacher's class contact time, i.e. 23.5 hrs per week they will be teaching pupils.

This **PPA time is "protected"**. In other words, you cannot be called to undertake cover or any other duties for this time. It is your time.

The aim is not that you will never have to undertake preparation, marking and assessment at home – but that your PPA time in school should take a definite 'edge' of the work you will do in the evening.

However, school leaders are not expected to provide all the 10% PPA within the school day when pupils are in school. As it is part of the 1,265 hours, some of it can be completed after school.

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Q. When can a teacher be asked to cover or supervise?

The provisions set out in the TNC 2011/8 **Workload Agreement** are repeated in the 2020 **Pay Agreement**:

In large schools (222+ pupils):

- when a colleague is **absent for one or two days** (subject to the maximum class contact **limit of 23.5** hours)
- if it were not known that the absence would exceed 2 days - teachers can cover on the **first and second day** only.

Q. How much cover should I be doing?

Supervision occurs when a teacher is asked to engage in **activities outside the classroom** where there is no active teaching taking place.

When a teacher is required to supervise this must be accounted for in the 1,265 hours of Directed Time, but it is not part of the 23.5 hours class contact time.

Class cover is teaching and is categorised as part of class contact time.

It is important for school leaders to be mindful that a teacher's weekly class contact time cannot exceed 23.5 hours per week in a post primary school.

Q. I thought all time in school other than lunch had to be included so our 15-minute break which is not on this? (8:50 – 3:30 minus lunch)?

All time that you are directed to be in the school is directed time and must be included in the 1265 hours

All teachers are required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.00pm (2:30pm).

Lunch breaks are unpaid and do not count towards Directed Time and teachers are not required to remain on school premises during lunchbreak.

Morning supervision is non-class contact time but should be accounted for as such in the teacher's Directed Time budget.

Q. What about lunchtime supervision:

It is little known or understood today, but within the 1987 negotiation on the Jordanstown Agreement, teachers' unions accepted an additional 5 days on the working year to facilitate 5 INSET days (then known as "**Baker**" days after the Education Minister Kenneth Baker) in return, or in 'trade' for, an uninterrupted daily lunch-break.

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The right to a lunch break was hard-earned and should not be lightly ceded by NEU members.

The **Jordanstown Agreement** (as set out in DE Circular 1987/26) is clear:

- teachers are not required to do mid-day supervision (unless employed under a separate, or secondary, contract as a midday supervisor).
- teachers are entitled to a break of at least 30 minutes between 12noon and 2pm (12noon to 2.30pm in nursery and primary schools).

That said, there are occasions when teachers want to '**voluntarily**' do lunchtime supervision.

Our advice is that this should only be done if they are covered by a **secondary contract** – and paid an acceptable rate for the job. The 'target' for the National Living Wage is £9 per hour, although the current rate (National Minimum Wage) is £8.72 (over 25).

However, we would argue that it is reasonable for a teacher employed as a midday supervisor is paid a 'pro rata' of your teacher's salary.

The basic hourly calculation is your annual salary, divided by 52 (weeks), then divided by the 32.4 statutory weekly hours. So, a teacher on UPS1 should seek at least £21 per hour!

There is also a requirement that schools ensure that the teachers carrying out such lunchtime supervision are covered by the **school's insurance policy** against vicarious liability.

Through NEU casework we have seen cases where some insurance providers refuse to provide insurance cover to teachers who are fulfilling this role during what should be an agreed 30-minute paid lunch break.

Q. I am Head of 6th Form and as a result I have been given 3 periods or 1.5 hours for my responsibility, is this enough?

Some teachers will be in receipt of **Teaching Allowances** or **Special Educational Needs Allowances** that will have specific duties attached that are additional to teaching.

Where this is the case these **duties must also be allowed for** within the Directed Time budget of 1,265 hours.

It is the professional responsibility of the principal in all schools to ensure a Directed Time budget is prepared for, and gives due regard to, the individual responsibilities of each teacher in their school.

Every school's context is different, and no two posts of responsibilities are the same.

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This is recognised in the **Advice on Developing Time Budgets** where the principal and a member of staff should seek to reach agreement on an appropriate time budget that reflects their additional duties.

Schools may find it helpful to consider the roles and responsibilities associated with each level of allowance to ensure there is **workload balance, equity, and fairness** in their school.

Q. Why has time not been allocated for the increased workload due to being out of our rooms during the current pandemic.

The NEU are mindful of the **additional workload pressures** – in theory – if you have a 50 minute class and you arrive on-time/late, and then leave early to get to the next class – all of this should already be covered in class contact time allocation.

That said, if you are not able to use the full 50 minutes teaching then there is pressure to get through the work in less time and under more stress – that is appreciated.

This is the reason why the 1265 and the 23.5 are 'maximum' and a sensible approach is to leave a bit or 'wriggle room' to take account of the situation you find yourself in.

Q. Open Day is listed as 4 hours not a day and its usually on a Saturday granted this year is different and it may not happen, but our current calendar made it 196 days then.

The 195 days is the **maximum** number of days – all open days should be included in the 195 days – and then the four hours included in the 1265 hours.

Q. We introduced more testing and reporting this year in the form of common assessment tasks and none of that has been taken into consideration.

All **new initiatives must be consulted on and workload assessed** though an agreed framework.

All new initiatives must be related to the School Development Plan and properly resourced and funded. All time preparing for and implementing Initiatives must be included within the time-budget.

Q. What about meetings?

Principal should determine the **number of meetings** required per week and annually to meet the school's development needs. This decision should be reflected in the Annual Schedule of Meetings that will be distributed amongst all staff at the beginning of the year.

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Principals should also ensure that once meetings are scheduled, there is enough time remaining in the teacher's time budget to cover all other professional responsibilities including PPA time.

A **schedule of meetings** for staff should be provided at the start of the school year, with dates and times.

The schedule of meetings will be reflected in the non-teaching component of the Directed Time budget.

Creating a Directed Time budget without this information may result in staff exhausting their obligatory hours before the end of the school year.

Q. One issue that regularly comes up is that where teaching finishes at say 3:30 and a meeting is scheduled for 4:00 the 'trapped' 30 mins is not being considered as directed time which seems perverse?

Care should be taken when determining the start time of meetings.

We are aware that time is sometimes scheduled as a comfort break between the end of the school day and the meeting.

However, in the scenario presented in this question, it is important to note that this **"trapped" time** would need to be included in the Directed Time budget.

Q. What is 'contingency time'?

Every time budget must include contingency time to allow for unexpected issues.

The **Workload Agreement** (TNC2011/8) recommends contingency time *"to ensure there is flexibility to account for situations that may arise and can be included in the school budget"*.

Contingency time is what remains after all duties have been accounted for – but 1265 is a maximum and not a target.

Q. What provision has been made for online learning for students absent due to COVID-19?

Most schools will take a **sensible approach** to this, in terms of what can be reasonably expected, many teachers are finding this provision a drain on their time.

Even 5-10 minutes of uploading resources, lesson summary and homework per lesson does add up during non-contact time.

There should be an allocation, at least for this current academic year (or in future if schools expect this blended learning to be provided) to acknowledge the additional work teachers are being directed to engage in related to this.

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NEU Time Budget Checklist

- Check if your **1265 hours** per annum are calculated and shown
- Check what **195 days** you are required to attend school, (refer to school calendar) notably - any August days, such as exam results days, careers days or INSET days? - Any contractual Saturdays (or Sundays, or non-term-days) are included
- Check if your **10% PPA** is included
- Check if the time-allocation for your **promotional posts** (e.g. HOD, HoY etc) duties are included
- In the case of the **SENCO**, check if the time-allocation is included and is realistic
- Check if all **PRSD duties**, as reviewer or reviewee (planning time, observations, meeting time, report writing) is included – NEU also recommend that time is allocated for **CPD**
- Check if time allocated for all **meetings** is included, and realistic
- Check if time allocated for all **reports** required are included, and realistic
- Check if time allocated for **Inspection preparation** is included, and realistic
- Check if time allocated for work associated with **New Initiatives** or special projects is included, and realistic
- Check if time allocated for work associated with **Assessment** is included, and realistic
- Check if time (and days) allocated for work associated with **AQE or GL tests** is included, and realistic
- Check if time (and days) allocated for work associated with **Open Days** or **Parents Evenings** is included, and realistic – this year due to Covid-19 such meetings are online/phone and will take a lot more time
- Check if time is allocated for **Cover**
- Check if time is allocated for **Other Duties**, such as bus-duty, break-time supervision etc.
- Check if time is allocated as a **contingency** or for miscellaneous work

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Further Information

The NEU Checklist & Guidance

<https://neu.org.uk/media/11716/view>

The training for principals presentation agreed by Employers and Unions is here:

<https://sway.office.com/wzmmQD5CWSsLJozk?ref=email>

Teachers Pay and Conditions of Service ('Jordanstown')

[DE Circular 1987/26:](#)

Teachers' (Terms and Conditions of Employment) (Amended) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1988 ([link](#))

The TNC Workload Agreement

[TNC 2011/8](#)

The Pay & Workload Agreement between Management and Trade Union Side of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee

[TNC 2020/1](#)

Advice on Developing Directed Time Budgets ([link](#))

You can also download the material to use separately from this resource:

[Time Budgets](#)

You might also find this [checklist](#) useful to review planning.

DE also provided frequently asked questions for Principals

[FAQs](#)

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