

What are your main duties?

1. Encourage 100 per cent financial membership.
2. Be the spokesperson for Federation in the workplace.
3. Call Federation meetings.
4. Notify your Federation TAFE Organiser of important decisions or issues.
5. Provide members with Federation emails, notices, circulars and bulletins.
6. Promote the objects and policies of Federation.
7. Act on the complaints and problems of members.
8. Accompany members in interviews with workplace managers.

Women's Contact

Please ensure your members elect a Women's Contact and that she is a part of the Federation team in your workplace. Her role is to ensure members are aware of Federation policies on women, especially on matters relating to sex-based harassment and discrimination. The Women's Contact is kept informed on issues of concern to women by newsletters, journal articles and mail-outs from Federation's Women's Coordinator.

What is your legal status?

Rule 15 says the Federation Representative is the recognised spokesperson of the union. Our Rules have been approved by the NSW Industrial Registrar.

Release time for Federation Representatives

The award for TAFE teachers says in clause 38 "Industrial Rights" that the Federation Representative "shall be allowed the necessary time during working hours to interview the employer or their representative on matters affecting employees" and "shall be allowed a reasonable period of time during working hours to interview a duly accredited Federation official". The clause also says that where an employee "is required by TAFE, nominated by the Federation or otherwise elected by other employers to participate in work based consultative or like committees, TAFE shall provide such employees with paid leave to attend to such matters" and that where such a committee undertakes a project "consistent with their term of reference, TAFE shall provide sufficient paid time to enable the employee to undertake the project". (Teacher representatives on an Institute Consultative Committee are also entitled to release from teaching.)

It should be noted that any such time would be separate from and additional to any release time arising from a member's responsibilities as an OH&S Representative or on an OH&S Committee.

Federation believes that all Federation Representatives should have at least two hours of release time per week to assist them to perform their duties.

How to assist staff members to gain regular and valuable information

Material is sent regularly from Federation, including material from TAFE TA, to keep members fully informed about decisions and campaigns. Please make sure that all information is readily available and accessible to members.

1. *Education* is a major source of information to members. Each financial member receives a copy. Information is also sent to Federation Representatives by email and post.
2. Tefed Action is sent to Federation Representatives throughout the year. These bulletins include important notices and requests for action by Federation Representatives and workplace members. Please let us know if the number of posters you are receiving is inappropriate.
3. The Federation website at www.nswtf.org.au is another means by which the union communicates with members. It is also the archive for a range of campaign information and has a Members' Area with information and advice about the TAFE Awards.
4. Information is sent to workplaces at appropriate times during the year. This information should be kept so members can refer to these publications when necessary. Other sources of information distributed to Federation Representatives include hard copies of Welfare Leaflets as they are revised and a CD-ROM collecting much of the information previously referred to.

Workplace meetings

You should hold regular meetings of Federation members at your workplace. These may be to give reports, implement campaigns or discuss local concerns or disputes. They may be to make decisions expressing views members want the Federation to address.

Your Organiser is available to assist you

Each workplace has access to a full time Federation Organiser whose role is to assist you in representing members and implementing campaigns. Organisers are available to attend meetings at your workplace. Get to know your Organiser and don't hesitate to contact him/her if you need advice or help.

Communications Room

The Communications Room can provide information on a range of issues or transfer you to the Post School Education unit to speak to your TAFE Organiser or the TAFE Phone Duty Officer.

Welfare Officers

Federation has five Welfare Officers who provide assistance and support to members on individual concerns related to their employment. Members requiring specialist advice on issues such as workers compensation, leave, superannuation, misconduct allegations, legal or other welfare issues can contact a Welfare Officer.

How to inform your union of your staff's views

1. Send a letter, email and/or copy of resolutions carried to the General Secretary.
2. Attend a TAFE TA Council meeting to report and/or get endorsement of decisions taken and if possible, attend Federation Council meetings.
3. Inform your Organiser.

Workplace Committees

Workplace committees such as OH&S and Institute Consultative Committees have a vital role in supporting and sharing the Federation Representative's work. Your Organiser can give you advice about this.

Trade Union Training

Please encourage all members, and particularly new or relatively new recruits, to apply for an appropriate course. Federation Representatives and Women's Contacts are given priority for any courses offered. Teaching replacement for your classes will be provided for Federation-approved courses.

Details about courses appear in Federation's Trade Union Training program published in *Education*, sent to all workplaces and posted on the website. Copies of the program are available from Federation. For specific inquiries on the Women's Contact course telephone the Women's Coordinator and for particular inquiries concerning any of the other courses please contact the Trade Union Training Officer. They can be reached on (02) 9217 2100 or 1300 654 369.

Leave without pay and Federation fees

Financial members can apply for exemption from payment of Federation fees for the period of their unpaid leave. All applications must be in advance, in writing, enclosing a copy of leave approval documents. Members on sick leave without pay who have not received their leave approval documents should provide a statutory declaration, giving the exact dates of leave without pay. Casual and temporary teachers should document the period during which they will not be available for work.

*Authorised by John Irving, General Secretary, NSW Teachers Federation,
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How to be an effective Federation Representative in a TAFE college

