

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Your questions answered

Q I have been allocated a ‘Meadowbank’ in term 4 as a form of cover. What is a ‘Meadowbank’ and how many can I be given?

A A ‘Meadowbank’ is a year 12 relieving period. Sub-clause 2.69 of the Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award 2024 states: “Year 12 Relieving Period’ means a relieving period required to be undertaken by a teacher when that school teacher has been relieved of their timetabled year 12 face-to-face teaching duties after year 12 students leave school in term 4 to sit for the HSC.”

Clause 16.7 states: “A principal may require all teachers with year 12 classes to take, from the time year 12 students leave to sit for their HSC exams in term 4, up to 50 per cent of their timetable load of year 12 classes as year 12 relieving periods. As far as possible, periods will be allocated to a teacher in the same faculty as that of the absent teacher.”

Federation maintains that Meadowbank extras can only be used to replace teachers who are absent and should fall in the period(s) that the teacher was timetabled on a HSC class.

Members should negotiate the best implementation of the Award on Meadowbank extras with their principal. Clearly, the principal has discretion. This discretion could extend, for example, from a circumstance where no Meadowbank extras are issued prior to HSC examinations commencing, to no Meadowbank extras being issued until after the last year 12 examination has been held in the subjects taught by the teacher or

to no Meadowbank extras being issued at all.

One final point needs to be made: The general guidelines that apply to the issuing of extras do not apply to the distribution of Meadowbank extras.

Q My school has an integrated sports program. Can I be forced into taking additional teaching time instead of sport supervision?

A An integrated school sports program does not automatically mean you can be required to coach or supervise sport or have your teaching load increased.

Members working in schools with integrated sport arrangements should be familiar with their entitlements under the Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award 2024, particularly those relating to maximum teaching time, sport supervision and workload.

A common misconception is that sport supervision and teaching time can simply be combined into a single allocation of time and distributed through a timetable. However, clause 16 of the Award specifies otherwise.

In the Award:

- teaching time and sport supervision are treated as distinct components of a secondary teacher’s workload
- maximum teaching loads are defined
- specific arrangements relating to sport supervision are outlined.

Importantly, clause 16.6 provides that a teacher may be allocated alternate face-to-face teaching duties in lieu of sport supervision or to undertake sports supervision on

weekends “with the agreement of each teacher”.

If your teaching time and your sport supervision were intended to be the same thing, then there would be no need for a provision that allows for arrangements in lieu, with the agreement of the teacher concerned. Integrated sport is ultimately a timetabling model — it does not remove the Award provisions relating to teaching loads or sport supervision.

Q I have been asked to be a support person for a performance meeting. What is my role and responsibility?

A A support person’s role is to ensure that the views of the staff member asked to attend a meeting about their performance are heard, to help them focus their responses and to clarify information. The role is an important procedural fairness safeguard for the member.

A staff member asked to attend a meeting to discuss concerns about their performance or during formal meetings in an improvement program should be offered the opportunity to bring a support person to the meeting.

In this context, the support person is not an advocate.

The role of a support person is to:

- provide emotional and practical support to the staff member
- provide advice to the staff member about their rights and entitlements
- clarify the process or proceedings to the staff member, when necessary
- hold private conversations with the staff member, as needed
- take notes for the staff member, when necessary.

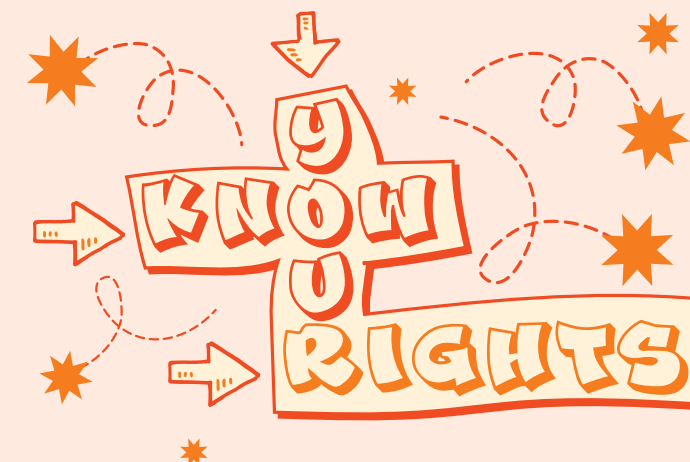
Q Federation’s new guidance for responding to harmful behaviour suggests three kinds of incident reporting. Why should I report work health and safety issues in more than one way?

A The systems for recording and acting on work health and safety (WHS) issues reported by teachers in schools each serve different purposes. The three kinds of reports ensure that your school’s records of student behaviour are maintained and can be used to support actions, that the Department of Education is informed and that the school’s WHS Hazard Register is updated.

Using all these reporting tools allows the full range of procedural and consultative measures to be more readily enacted when resolving issues or assisting with escalation, where needed. It should be noted that when making these multiple reports, the information related to the WHS issue/s doesn’t have to be modified too much — as long as the information is appropriate for each. For example, an entry into Sentral (or other recording system) detailing repeated threatening behaviour directed at a teacher, which is used to support a school’s behaviour management procedures, can also be used to report threatening behaviour as a psychosocial hazard via the online Incident Support and Hotline. The Hotline report will be triaged by the Department’s Health, Safety and Staff Wellbeing Directorate staff and appropriate advice and support should be provided, but this will not always go to school-level actions. The same Incident Report can then be used as

the basis for, or as an attachment to, a WHS Hazard Report form. When completed, provide it to the principal and the school’s Health and Safety Representative (if you have one) and/or the school’s WHS Committee. Once a WHS hazard is notified at the school level, school level actions need to be taken to address the risks presented by the hazard — regardless of whether the hazard is physical, psychological or related to infrastructure or behaviour. While it can be argued that an incident of threatening behaviour should already be considered a WHS hazard at the school level, using the Department’s WHS Hazard Report form ensures that this occurs.

Individual schools do not have the resources to deal with all WHS hazards. If actions taken after hazard reporting do not reduce the risks as far as is reasonably practicable, members can escalate the matter through the Department’s *WHS Issue Resolution Procedure*. Doing this is not controversial, as it is a requirement of the Work Health and Safety Act and follows the Department’s WHS procedures, which state issue/s “must” proceed to WHS Issue Resolution if they cannot be resolved at the school level, taking the matter beyond the resources of the individual school and accessing the full resources of the Department.



REFERENCES

- Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award 2024
- Can I be forced into taking additional teaching time instead of sport supervision?
- Role of the support person in performance meetings (NSW Government)
- Procedures for addressing teacher efficiency for permanent teachers (full time and part time), executive staff and principals (TR10)

Links to the reference documents



Questions are answered by:

- Sam Clay, Deputy Secretary (Research, Industrial and Professional Support)
- Damian Purins, Work Health and Safety Officer
- Guy McDermott, City Organiser

Have you got any questions for us?
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