

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Your questions answered

Q Are school assemblies counted as teaching time?

A School assemblies are counted as teaching time and teachers are required to attend assemblies, in accordance with the Department's Attendance and Student Supervision factsheet.

Q I am a beginning teacher currently teaching on a casual basis. If I get a 12-month engagement as a temporary teacher or a permanent appointment, am I entitled to additional release?

A As a temporary teacher you are eligible for two hours of additional release time through Beginning Temporary Teacher Support Funding when all of the following apply:

- are employed in your first, consecutive four-term, full-time temporary engagement within a calendar year
- are approved in SAP by 5pm on 1 March in the year of engagement
- have not yet achieved accreditation at Proficient Teacher level at the date you commence the temporary engagement
- have cumulative past experience with the Department of equivalent to, or less than, two years of full-time experience, excluding all casual experience.

The additional release is intended for you to work collaboratively with your supervising teachers and/or mentor to develop your practice and work towards your accreditation at Proficient Teacher level.

Teacher classifications not currently eligible for the entitlement are:

- casual teachers
- counsellors, home school liaison officers, teaching or non-teaching executives or principals
- teachers who previously received any Beginning Teacher Support Funding
- temporary teachers who are employed for less than four consecutive terms in a calendar year.

If you meet the criteria and are not receiving Beginning Temporary Teacher Support funding, please contact your Organiser or Federation's Professional Support section.



Q My allocation of supervision duties seems discriminatory. What are the guidelines?

A Principals must plan rostered supervision duties in consultation with teachers (see

Determination 1 of 2026). Supervision duties must be allocated in a fair and equitable manner. The principal must take into account a teacher's family, work and care responsibilities among other factors.



Q I am a secondary teacher. Does roll call count as part of teaching time?

A In secondary schools, a stand-alone roll call of 10 minutes or less is not counted as teaching time in accordance with the Department's Attendance and Student Supervision factsheet.

However, when a school incorporates roll call into a reading, pastoral care or other education program, the time scheduled to deliver the program and mark the roll is counted as teaching time.

Q Is it true that all I have to do is ask for a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) and we get one?

A The Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation only requires one worker to formally request that a HSR be elected to start a mandatory process (within 14 days) that would generally lead to at least one HSR being elected. The Department

publishes clear information about the process — search for "HSR election" when logged into the Department Portal and then follow the link to Work Health and Safety Consultation Procedure. TAFE has similar information available. You do not need to ask anyone's permission to formally request that a HSR be elected. It is a right provided to all workers in NSW under the WHS Act.

Q My principal asked if we want a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or a Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee. Can we have both? And what would be the benefits of having a HSR?

A Yes, you can have both! In fact, one of the best models is to have a HSR and a WHS Committee. HSRs have the power to investigate matters, seek resolutions to issues and to escalate matters to SafeWork NSW if they cannot be resolved. HSRs can represent all the workers on a site (including the principal, who is also a worker as defined by the Act) in WHS matters. Federation's long-standing position is that in most schools and TAFE campuses, members would be best represented in WHS matters by electing a HSR and having an active WHS Committee.



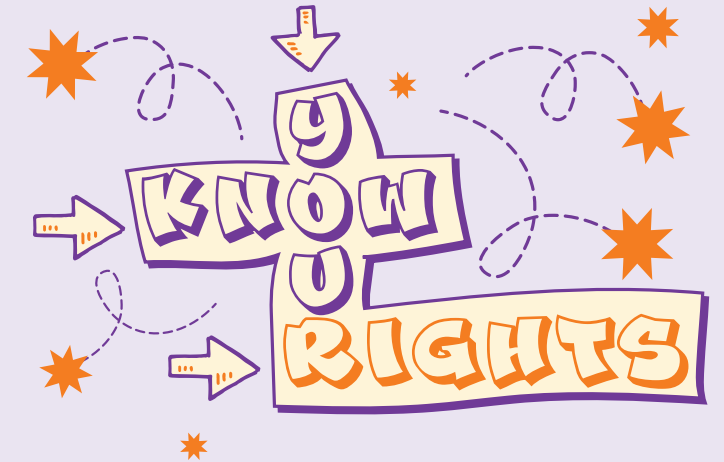
Q In regard to my employment status, what's the difference between an engagement, a contract and a permanent appointment?

A In NSW public schools, teacher employment on a temporary basis is known as an engagement rather than a contract. Temporary engagements may cease early only under specific circumstances with a notice period of four weeks. Teachers are encouraged to seek advice if they are informed that their temporary engagement will cease.

The Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award clearly defines the employment categories that determine how teachers are engaged as a casual or temporary teacher.

Temporary engagements are for a period of four weeks or more on a full-time basis, or two terms or more on a part-time basis.

Permanent appointment refers to placement of a permanent teacher in a Department of Education school. Permanent teachers may be transferred from one position to another in accordance with the Staffing Agreement.



REFERENCES

- Attendance and Student Supervision factsheet
- Determination 1 of 2026
- Crown Employees (Teachers in Schools and Related Employees) Salaries and Conditions Award

Go online for live links to the reference documents



Questions are answered by:

- Anthony Brereton, Officer attached to Casual Teachers
- Sam Clay, Deputy Secretary (Research, Industrial and Professional Support)
- Damian Purins, Work Health and Safety Officer

Have you got any questions for us? Email journal@nswtf.org.au.