

TEACHER WORKLOAD

Introduction

- 1.1 In January 2005 the SNCT agreed to commission a workload survey. The purpose of this survey was to provide SNCT with evidence on teacher workload as set out in Annex C of the 2001 National Agreement, “A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century” (Appendix 1). This is one of the criteria to be considered by the SNCT to determine whether teachers’ contractual hours could be expressed within two time divisions, viz class contact time and time remaining.
- 1.2 The research contract was awarded to the University of Glasgow. A Steering Group of the SNCT assisted the project. The SNCT received a final report at its meeting on 27 September 2006. The full report and appendices were published by the SNCT on its website.
- 1.3 In addition, the SNCT is considering these issues through an ongoing action plan (Appendix 2).
- 1.4 The Salaries Committee initially considered the report at its meeting on 2 November 2006 and agreed to prepare a position paper on the issues arising from the report.
- 1.5 The Report raises a number of key issues for the EIS. Some of these concerns require to be addressed by the SNCT both at national level and within Local Negotiating Committees for Teachers while other concerns, outwith the remit of the SNCT, will be raised politically by the Institute.
- 1.6 It is also recognised that the Report raises a number of complex issues which require consideration by the EIS.

The 2001 Agreement

- 2.1 “A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century” set out the working hours of teachers:

2.2 Working Hours: Working Week

“Agreement has been reached on the working week as follows:

- the introduction of a 35 hour week for all teachers from 1 August 2001;
- A phased reduction in maximum class contact time to 22.5 hours per week equalised across the primary, secondary and special school sectors;
- during the phasing period, the class contact commitment of a teacher will be complemented by an allowance of personal time for preparation and correction: this allowance will be no less than one third of the teacher’s actual class contact commitment;

- all tasks which do not require the teacher to be on the school premises can be carried out at a time and place of the teacher's choosing: teachers will notify the appropriate manager of their intention in this respect; and
 - from August 2006, at the earliest, the contractual obligations of teachers will be expressed in relation solely to a 35 hour week within which a maximum of 22.5 hours will be devoted to class contact.”
- 2.2 It was agreed that, from no earlier than August 2006, teachers' working time would be expressed solely as maximum class contact time and time remaining if the objective criteria established under Annex C of the Agreement were met.
- 2.3 The Agreement set out a Code of Practice for Working Time Arrangements to apply during the transitional period. This Code of Practice (Annex D) requires establishments to reach agreement on working time arrangements, on the use of remaining time (ie time beyond maximum class contact time and personal time which was set at one-third of class contact time during the transitional period).
- 2.4 Annex D made it clear that “the individual and collective work of teachers should be capable of being undertaken within the 35 hour working week”.
- 2.5 National advice was agreed by Council and approved by the 2004 Annual General Meeting on Working Time Arrangements (Appendix 3).
- 2.6 The SNCT, through its Working Group on the Review of LNCTs, has recognised that having Working Time Agreements in place, does not, *ipso facto*, address the issue of excessive workload for teachers.

The SNCT and the Report

- 3.1 The Report makes it clear that teachers are typically working an average of 45 hours weekly and promoted staff are working beyond this. Senior promoted staff are working typically an average of 55 hours weekly.
- 3.2 In this regard, the 2001 Agreement and Working Time Agreements are not providing sufficient protection for teachers. Notwithstanding some complex factors which impact on teacher workload, and which are set out in Section 5 below, it is clear that workload has not been controlled to the extent required by the 2001 Agreement.
- 3.3 The workload Report provides evidence that the SNCT cannot conclude that the criteria, set out in Annex C of the Agreement, have been met. Therefore, the SNCT should not proceed to Stage 4 of teachers Working Hours: Working Week at this time.
- 3.4 In addition to class contact, teachers spend most time in tasks related to their own teaching. It would nonetheless be facile to conclude that workload could be managed were it not for collective commitments. Indeed, while such a conclusion

appears superficially attractive, collegiate working is a crucial part of the 2001 Agreement.

- 3.5 The workload research predated the 2006 reduction in maximum class contact to 22.5 hours. This reduction, properly implemented, may assist the management of workload. However, Working Time Agreements will not provide the solution without a commitment from the Scottish Executive and Council to see workload as a priority and seek to reduce external demands on schools. The Workload Report provides strong evidence to conclude that the current time zones should be retained and that the percentage of time for personal work should be increased. In addition to this point, there is evidence that agreements on the remaining time require to take greater account of workload issues.
- 3.6 The proposals that the SNCT should promulgate effective time management and work-life balance models and that LNCTs should undertake further work on task prioritisation may lead to a conclusion that workload demands derive from the management of time rather than from the demands placed on teachers. It would be seriously problematic for the SNCT if such a deficit model were to emerge. While time management strategies and task prioritisation are strands worth developing these strands will be insignificant without teachers being empowered, individually and collectively, to gain control of their workload.
- 3.7 Collegiality offers a way forward to teachers to ensure that workload is properly considered when decisions are taken on working time agreements, improvement plans or curriculum change. Therefore, the development of collegiality will be necessary to ensure that workload issues can be tackled effectively. In this regard the outcome of findings from LNCTs on monitoring Working Time Agreements will inform the SNCT on further work to be undertaken to assist the management of workload.
- 3.8 The Workload Report indicated that teachers were reluctant to see the job of teaching as being capable of being broken down into essential/non essential tasks. This holistic attitude poses a question on whether a sufficient reduction in teachers' workload will be delivered by external mechanisms alone. It may also require a mindset shift by teachers themselves. However, the EIS should seek further work by the SNCT to research teachers' perceptions of the job.
- 3.9 Teacher workload is connected to the wide variety of teaching methods within one classroom and the associated burden of preparation, correction and assessment. While some steps have been made to reduce class size teachers require the contractual protection of class size maxima being set through the SNCT.
- 3.10 The Workload Report emphasised the benefits that the deployment of additional support staff, arising from the 2001 Agreement, make to the workload of teachers. Regrettably, a significant number of Councils have not fully implemented this part of the Agreement and too often teachers, especially promoted teachers, are still undertaking duties set out in Annex E of the Agreement, and which are not the responsibility of teachers.

Factors Outwith the SNCT

- 4.1 The Workload Report cites discipline, preparation, correction and assessment as key workload factors for teachers. Demands in these areas have increased in these areas over the years. Teachers have also developed a range of teaching methodologies and strategies. However, there has been a lost opportunity to manage change by reducing class size maxima. Workload, and the sense of being disempowered, are significant factors in teacher stress. Reduced class size maxima will go a long way to managing indiscipline, reduce bureaucracy and give teachers a sense of control over what they do. This opportunity to reduce class size maxima must now be seized and such maxima should be determined by the SNCT (see paragraph 3.9 above).
- 4.2 The Report identifies the issue of innovation fatigue and the workload involved in the implementation of new initiatives. The desire to hold teachers accountable, to both HMIE and Councils, based on audit trails and performance measures has led to a burgeoning bureaucracy which adds to teachers feeling that external demands diminish rather than add value to the job of teaching and take time away from teaching. Even where schools have manageable development plans/improvement plans these can be disrupted by innovations imposed on schools.
- 4.3 The Curriculum for Excellence could, if properly resourced and introduced over a reasonable timescale, offer an opportunity to give teachers greater professional control over what they do. There are workload issues that arise from a Curriculum for Excellence. In particular, there may emerge a culture in which teachers reinvent the wheel by creating their own materials. This can be attributed to a number of factors:
- (i) the lack of funds to buy appropriate text books in sufficient numbers.
 - (ii) the unavailability of relevant published materials.
 - (iii) a culture in which the use of text books or other published materials is denigrated.
 - (iv) the hostility of some councils to allowing teachers to share resources through means such as GLOW, on the grounds that materials produced by their employees is the property of the employer

At the present moment there is a continuing lack of specification of the likely outcome of the ACfE not only in terms of the curriculum itself but also in terms of any possible associated changes to the assessment regime. It should also be noted that, within such a major change, teachers must be afforded the time and opportunity to reflect on their practice.

- 4.4 Some Councils are seeking to use the Curriculum for Excellence as a means of imposing a further bureaucratic straight jacket on schools and to reinforce testing as the most demonstrable mechanism to ensure quality control. In this regard the excessive demands for evidence of individual learning plans and for written (or other collected) evidence of formative assessment have significant workload implications.

- 4.5 In some circumstances, the demands placed on senior promoted staff are not unrelated to management restructuring. Councils have not considered the total workload demand on schools before introducing new management structures. Leaner management structures arising from the reduction in promoted posts which have been developed in some council areas have been accompanied by workload pressures being added to promoted staff at senior and middle management levels and there is an attempt to devolve to unpromoted staff tasks carried out formerly by Principal Teachers. There is also a growing pressure on promoted staff in relation to wider agency working and in mentoring student and probationer teachers.
- 4.6 Increased devolution from authority to school level also places a burden on senior managers. Such decisions may reflect bureaucratic convenience with no evaluation being made on the impact of such devolution on school managers. Councils should reconsider school management demands in the light of the Workload Report and ensure sufficient management time to meet these demands. The demands on Head Teachers who often have a class teaching commitment in small schools particularly requires to be addressed.
- 4.7 While the EIS, in general terms, supports inclusion it is clear that inclusion raises workload issues in relation to time for planning, including collaboration with others, time for additional preparation and, in too many cases, additional paperwork to create audit trails
- 4.8 Teacher workload, however, raises a number of complex issues which will not all be resolved by SNCT or political action. There is a culture operating within British society of professionals working long hours and being expected to do so. In that regard teaching reflects a wider societal problem which requires to be challenged. Research suggests that this is a greater problem in Britain than elsewhere in Europe. It is also clear from research that productivity will diminish significantly when long hours are worked. The TUC has found that British workers work on average three hours per week above the average in the EU-15, while productivity is only 95% of the EU-15 average. Other research links long hours to employee ill health.
- 4.9 Teachers may embrace a long hours culture for a number of reasons. For some, it may be how they deliver a professional job and ensure accountability to those they teach. For some, being seen to work beyond contractual hours is perceived to be a *sine qua non* for career advancement and some senior managers seek to encourage others to follow this model of working. For others, the long hours they work may reflect the pressure which they are working under. Perversely, the encouragement of moving to a more professional approach to teaching may make some teachers work longer hours.
- 4.10 While recognising that teachers work long hours like other professionals the work-life balance must be addressed within education. In research the Work Foundation in examining work-life balance in the public sector drew the conclusion that, while employers have policies on work-life balance the reality is that flexibility is discouraged. Therefore, the EIS must challenge the long hours agenda.

Conclusions

- 5.1 The Workload Report provides evidence that the SNCT should not proceed to Stage 4 of the teachers' working time as set out in paragraph 2.4 of the 2001 Agreement (paragraph 3.3).
- 5.2 There is an argument that the current time zones should not only be retained but the percentage of time for personal time should be increased (paragraph 3.4).
- 5.3 Care should be taken that proposals in the SNCT Action Plan to assist teachers manage time more effectively should not create a deficit model in which workload problems are associated with the management of tasks rather than the burden of tasks (paragraph 3.5).
- 5.4 The development of collegiality will assist teachers gain more control over workload decisions (paragraph 3.6).
- 5.5 The reduction of class size maxima would do much to reduce workload demands on class teachers (paragraph 4.1).
- 5.6 Councils should consider the workload pressure on staff and provide sufficient management time to ensure that such duties can be overtaken within contractual hours. In light of the Workload Report Councils require to reconsider management structures and devolved decision making. In particular, the workload pressures on Heads is very small schools who often have a class teaching commitment requires to be considered. (Paragraphs 4.4. and 4.5).
- 5.7 The EIS should seek SNCT research on teachers' perceptions of the job of teaching to provide further evidence of some complex issues underpinning workload (paragraph 3.81).

ANNEX C of the 2001 National Agreement

SNCT CRITERIA ON THE WORKING WEEK

The following objective conditions will be used to determine the implementation of the national agreement on the working week in August 2006.

- 1 The number of teachers in service to deliver the reduction in class contact time to 22.5 hours per week.
- 2 The establishment of national, local and school based negotiating machinery.
- 3 Clear monitoring procedures at local level.
- 4 The outcome of a sample workload survey.
- 5 A joint evaluation/audit of working arrangements at local level to assess the wider cultural climate in schools.

Teachers Working Time Research

The researchers presented a first draft to the Research Advisory Group (RAG) meeting on 30 May and a further draft to the RAG meeting on 2 August. Following that meeting the document was further revised for presentation to the SNCT for its meeting of 27 September.

The SNCT records its appreciation to the researchers and to the RAG for overseeing the research. The views expressed in the research document are those of the researchers.

The full report is appended. The SNCT acknowledges the research team has achieved its aim and provided the SNCT with evidence on whether commitments on teachers working time have been met.

Arising from the Report the SNCT has agreed the following actions:

For the SNCT:

- (i) The SNCT is currently monitoring working time arrangements. This work will provide further support for LNCTs in addressing workload.
- (ii) The SNCT agreed there is a need for further exploration of teachers' perceptions of their own work.
- (iii) The SNCT should promote models of good practice, at LNCT and school level, in controlling workload.
- (iv) The SNCT should consider how to promulgate effective time management and work-life balance models.
- (v) The SNCT should finalise a revised statement on collegiality.
- (vi) The SNCT should investigate appropriateness of time in relation to task with reference to LNCTs.

For LNCTs:

- (i) LNCTs should use the Report and evidence from the SNCTs Monitoring of Working Time Arrangements in addressing workload.
- (ii) LNCTs should undertake further work to assist teachers on task prioritization.
- (iii) LNCTs should consider strategies to assist the impact on individual teachers of working with both student teachers and probationers.

For Councils:

- (i) It would be desirable for local authorities to develop CPD courses on effective time management.

SNCT Commentary

Ref	Research Findings	Comment
<p>Summary Para 9</p> <p>Table 4.1</p> <p>Paras 4.10 – 4.16</p> <p>Para 4.29</p>	<p>The average number of hours worked for all respondents to the time use diary was 45 hours per week (sweep 1 was 45.10 hours and sweep 2 was 44.66 hours)</p>	<p>The SNCT steered the research group to weeks which were likely to be peak times. The researchers found that the weeks in the time use diaries were typical weeks (paragraph 4.28). The research has identified that teachers are working beyond 35 hours. A number of factors influenced this. The SNCT notes from the research that teachers find it difficult to distinguish between essential and other work. The researchers have referred to respondents' views on the holistic nature of teaching and, as expressed in paragraph 5.11, the complexity of teachers' view, of their professional tasks. This point was also reflected by LNCT Joint Secretaries (paragraph 3.27). The SNCT is also conscious that the cultural shift required to implement the National Agreement fully was likely to be a slow process. Teachers' workload will be controlled more effectively where teachers have full confidence in collegiate working and in using working time agreement to manage workload.</p>
<p>Table 4.1</p>	<p>The use of time use diaries allowed the researchers to break down teachers work into key categories of task</p>	<p>While it is noted that class contact is under the 2006 target of 22.5 hours (see also Executive Summary paragraph 9, paragraph 4.20) the reduction to 22.5 hours class contact for all classroom teachers will assist the management of workload.</p> <p>The individual work undertaken by teachers in correction and assessment and preparation are, if taken together, likely to account for 13 hours weekly. The National Agreement formally set aside one third of class contact time for personal work and from the time remaining. LNCTs through school Working Time Arrangements may have provided for additional time for preparation and correction. This finding represents a significant issue and is closely connected with teachers' perceptions of the nature of the holistic nature of their work as identified above. The survey predated the reduction to 22.5 hours class contact across all sectors.</p>
<p>Table 4.1</p> <p>Para 4.26</p>	<p>The overall average time on CPD, in sweep 1, was 3.05 hours and 2.59 hours in sweep 2</p>	<p>The SNCT notes that teachers did not distinguish between CPD which is planned within collegiate working or between CPD</p>

Ref	Research Findings	Comment
		<p>which arises from the individual contractual requirement of up to 35 hours annually for CPD.</p> <p>The SNCT believes the National Agreement set out a clear commitment to professional development and the finding in paragraph 6.8 reflects the recognition that CPD is considered by teachers as one of the many positive changes secured by the implementation of the Agreement</p>
Table 4.2	<p>Appropriateness of time in relation to task-</p> <p>Key differences in observations between secondary and primary teachers on class contact, preparation, correction and assessment, collegiate activity and management time, CPD</p>	<p>It would be wrong to draw simplistic conclusions from this. These findings may reflect issues over control of workload and professional judgement that require to be considered by the SNCT. The primary sector has already experienced a reduction in class contact time. The researchers commented favourably upon this (paragraph 5.10). From the beginning of this session the further reduction in class contact time in the primary and the reduction in secondary will assist the management of workload.</p>
Table 4.2	<p>Appropriateness of time in relation to task</p> <p>- Common view across sectors that pastoral activities and discipline matters, working with parents and external agencies and working with student teachers, probationers and classroom assistants was taking more time than appropriate.</p>	<p>While the global demand will recede the impact on individuals will have to be considered by Councils.</p>
<p>Para 4.30</p> <p>Table 5.8</p> <p>Figure 4.39</p>	<p>Perception of workload since the implementation of the Agreement</p> <p>- clear perception that workload has increased since the Agreement e.g. innovation overload.</p>	<p>The findings reveal an increase since the 1993 research. The SNCT believes that further work requires to be done on considering not only the volume of work but also control over work.</p> <p>The development of collegiality will assist teachers in exercising professional judgments on workload.</p>
<p>Para 4.16</p> <p>Figures 4.11 and 4.12</p>	<p>The findings revealed little significance in slight differences recorded across local authorities.</p>	<p>The SNCT welcomes this finding.</p>