



Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development

Human Resources

Management of Teacher Work



MANAGEMENT OF TEACHER WORK

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OVERVIEW

Increasing the educational attainment of all Victorian children requires a commitment to support teachers to fulfil their responsibilities in the professional contexts in which they work. The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* contains commitments that reflect the centrality of teacher practice in improving school performance and student outcomes. The agreement also provides for the local management of teacher work within reasonable and transparent statewide parameters that recognise the changing nature of work organisation in schools. Within these parameters which are set out below, each school will decide how best to deploy teachers to deliver quality education.

Class size, preparation and high quality content, correction and assessment are major factors impacting on improving instructional practice. Teachers should have the opportunity to perform all of their duties within a reasonable timeframe and have fair and reasonable conditions and students should have ready access to their teachers. In this context, the work allocated to a teacher should, as far as practicable, provide for an equitable distribution of work across all teachers in the school.

Where it is proposed to vary the duties of existing staff, local consultation will need to occur within the context of the terms and conditions of employment of the staff affected by the proposed variation.

The duties of a position may be redesigned on vacancy or by agreement with the incumbent or when establishing new positions or working arrangements within the school's overall workforce plan. When doing so, a principal will need to ensure that the [work value](#) level of a position is appropriate given the duties to be performed.

ALLOCATION OF TEACHER WORK

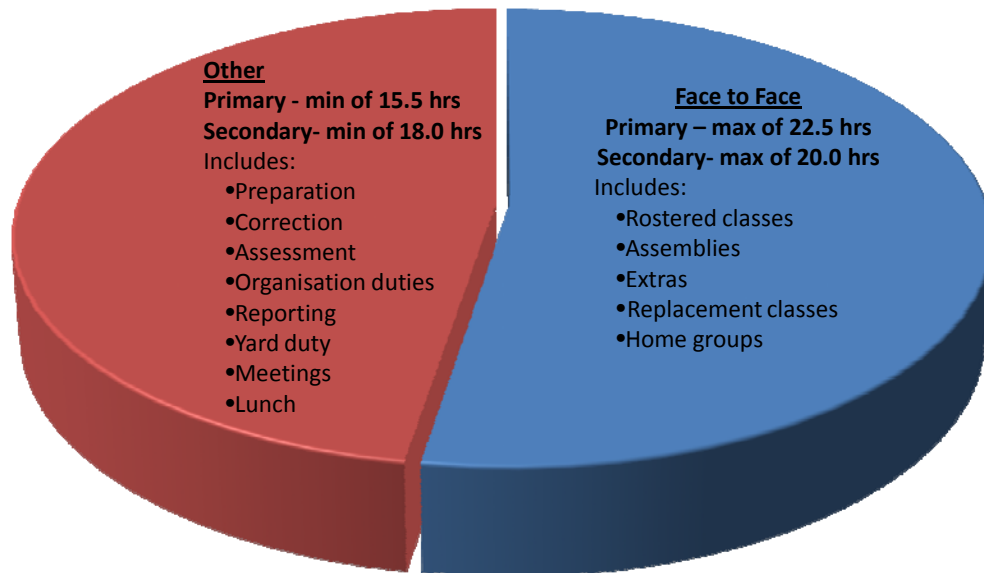
In considering the allocation of work to teachers four components must be taken into account:

- face-to-face teaching, including rostered classes, assemblies and extras
- other duties of teachers, including correction, preparation, assessment, meetings, student supervision, reporting and organisational duties
- other factors, including class size, curriculum mix, range of ability and age of students, resources available and facilities
- voluntary/discretionary effort, including school camps, concerts, excursions and after-school sport.

These four components must be considered together when determining the reasonableness of a teacher's overall workload. It is important to distinguish between the work that can be required of a teacher and the work a teacher may choose to undertake. As far as practicable, work should be equitably distributed and the work of an individual teacher is not to be unreasonable or excessive.

Duties required of a teacher for a thirty-eight hour week as set out in the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008*, is depicted as follows:

Teacher Work



Voluntary/Discretionary Effort

Teachers, as professionals contribute more than their required duties (e.g. school camps, concerts, after school sport etc). This occurs within the context of a whole school year. Principals should, as far as possible, ensure that discretionary effort is recognised and encourage the sharing of voluntary activities.

Face-to-face

Face-to-face teaching is defined in the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* as:

Regular rostered teaching sessions in a documented course of study approved by the employer only for which course the teacher has primary responsibility for educational delivery; and includes sessions of direct student instruction rostered or required by the employer:

- for curricular or pastoral functions involving student supervision, student counselling and consultation; or
- in the case of a teacher librarian, for student contact and consultation in a library.

'Extras' (classes allocated to replace absent teachers) are considered within the face-to-face teaching maximum.

It should be noted that within the definition of 'face-to-face' teaching time allowances are not included. However, in the organisation of work at the school level it is common practice to take account of time allowances when determining face-to-face teaching.

The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* specifies the maximum face-to-face teaching hours that a principal may assign to a teacher as follows:

- for primary teachers - not more than twenty-two hours thirty minutes per week
- for secondary teachers - not more than twenty hours per week unless the teacher supervises sporting activities of students on a structured basis for a period of two hours per week in which case the face-to-face teaching hours will be 18 hours 40 minutes per week
- for a teacher in a P-12 setting - the pro-rata of the above having regard to the proportion of teaching performed in years P-6 and 7-12 respectively.

In determining actual face-to-face teaching in the school the principal shall consult his or her staff, in accordance with the consultation provisions of the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008*. A teacher's face-to-face commitment shall not exceed the maximum specified in the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008*. In determining the face-to-face teaching hours of a teacher employed part-time the arrangements outlined in this section apply on a pro rata basis.

Principals should consider the face-to-face teaching commitments of all teachers. Principals can allocate a full range of duties and responsibilities, as the need arises, providing that the overall work commitment is neither excessive nor unreasonable.

A high level of other duties or activities involving voluntary or discretionary effort may warrant a reduction in the face-to-face component. Similarly, where a teacher has a lower face-to-face teaching component, additional duties may be allocated.

The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* provides for the face-to-face teaching arrangements that will apply in those schools where local agreement cannot be reached as follows:

- **for primary teachers** - the allocation of assigned face-to-face requirements should provide the opportunity for a teacher to perform all of her or his required duties within a reasonable timeframe and must not exceed twenty-two hours thirty minutes per week.
- **for secondary teachers** - the allocation of assigned face-to-face requirements of a teacher should provide the opportunity for the teacher to perform all of her or his required duties within a reasonable timeframe. A teacher cannot be required to undertake face-to-face teaching that exceeds an index of 480 (calculated by multiplying the teacher's actual face to face hours per week, inclusive of extras, by the number of students in each class). Time allowances are included in the index (calculated by multiplying the actual time allowance hours per week by the average number of students in all of the teacher's classes).

- **for teachers in P-12 schools** - the allocation of assigned face to face requirements of a teacher should provide the opportunity for the teacher to perform all of her or his required duties within a reasonable timeframe having regard to the primary and secondary requirements set out above.
- notwithstanding the requirements set out above for primary, secondary and P-12, the work at the school level of teacher librarians, MARC/MACC teachers, visiting teachers and instrumental music teachers may be varied through the consultative process with the agreement of the teacher(s) to meet the particular circumstances of that school or network of schools.

Replacement classes

Replacement classes should be agreed at the school level as part of the consultation on the allocation of teacher work. Replacement classes (extras) should be allocated in an equitable manner, and in the context of the total work of the teacher. Casual relief teachers should be engaged where it is likely that the allocation of a replacement class (extra) will result in a teacher being required to undertake an unreasonable or excessive workload.

The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* provides for the allocation of replacement classes that will apply in those schools where local agreement cannot be reached, as follows:

- a) replacement classes or reorganized classes of equivalent time period, which shall not count as an extra, may be assigned to a teacher who loses normal classes for any reason. Such classes may only be assigned within the day normal classes are lost. In November and December of each year as classes are dismissed, teachers may be allocated replacement classes up to 80 per cent of their timetabled allotment.
- b) Extras shall be considered within the face-to-face teaching maximum.
- c) Subject to (b) above, unless otherwise agreed at the school, the maximum allocation of extras to a teacher shall be calculated by the formula:

$$\frac{(23 \text{ less the number of face-to-face teaching periods per week}) \times 42}{2}$$

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Note - in those secondary schools where local agreement cannot be reached and the index set out above is in place, the extras formula in (c) above does not apply as the index operates to include extras.

Other duties

In addition to face-to-face teaching, teachers may be required to undertake a range of other duties consistent with their classification level. Based on the maximum available face-to-face teaching established under the Agreement and subject to the attendance provisions, the minimum number of hours per week of non-face-to-face duties that may be expected are:

- fifteen and a half hours for a primary teacher
- eighteen hours for a secondary teacher.

These other duties may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- preparation
- correction
- meetings
- student supervision (yard duty, bus duty, detention etc.)
- reporting
- organisational duties.

In the distribution of other duties the following factors are to be taken into account:

- as far as practicable, the equitable distribution of other duties within the school
- the relative importance of the various duties to be undertaken
- the time required to perform the duty
- the range and frequency of tasks to be performed
- the classification, qualifications, training and experience of the teacher
- the preparation and correction requirements.

The available time between the allotted face-to-face teaching time and the school instructional week should be allocated in useable blocks of time, e.g. of not less than thirty minutes, for the purpose of preparation, planning, assessment and correction.

Allocation of organisational duties

The principal has responsibility for determining the organisational duties, in accordance with the consultation provisions of the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008*, necessary for the efficient running of the school and the time release (if any) and special payment (if any) applicable for each organisational duty. Where it is determined that an organisational duty should attract a special payment the amount of the special payment may be set at different amounts depending on the classification level and range of the teacher undertaking that duty.

The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* sets out the process to be followed when allocating organisational duties as follows:

- Once the organisational duties are determined, teaching staff are to be provided with the opportunity to express interest in one or more of the organisational duties.
- The principal has responsibility for identifying the most suitable applicant for each organisational duty using the merit-based selection process that applies to special payments taking into account the requirements of the organisational duty and the qualifications and experience of each applicant.

- The principal will determine the successful applicant for each organisational duty having regard to the outcome of the merit-based selection process and will offer the organisational duty to that applicant. A successful applicant may decline the offer made.
- Should any organisational duty remain unfilled following the process set out above the principal can allocate that duty to any teacher (including a teacher who has declined an offer previously) provided the duty is consistent with the roles and responsibilities that can be required of that teacher and the factors set out above.

Other factors

The *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* commits all parties to ensuring all students experience high quality teaching and that they are supported to become effective learners. It is important that students are provided with the highest quality learning conditions and that teachers have every opportunity to deliver quality education.

Teachers should have the opportunity to perform all of their duties within a reasonable time frame and have fair and reasonable conditions including a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. Students should have ready access to their teachers.

In this context, the work allocated to a teacher should, as far as practicable, provide for an equitable distribution of work across all teachers in the school and recognise areas of learning that may require specific consideration, for example, practical classes where the use of equipment or material of a potentially dangerous nature is involved. Having effective health and safety practices in the workplace will assist in identifying, eliminating or at the very least mitigating risk factors that can lead to injury or illness.

The [Health and Safety web site](#) provides comprehensive information and advice regarding Occupational Health and Safety matters that need to be considered in the allocation of teacher work.

Where a teacher is required to travel between schools, campuses or annexes on any one day, a time allowance commensurate with the time taken to travel and associated logistical requirements shall be included in the determination of the teacher's total work requirements.

A teacher's overall work commitment is influenced by a number of factors including:

- class size
- curriculum mix (number of courses and nature of subjects taught)
- range of ability and age of students
- resources available

Class size

Subject to satisfying Government policy requirements and using the consultative processes of the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* each principal has the flexibility to consider class sizes in the context of teaching methodology and curriculum programs.

Established class groupings may be varied to cover the absence of a teacher only when there are no other suitable teachers available within the school and it is not possible to engage a suitable casual relief teacher.

The principal should take into account any workload implications that may arise as a consequence of variations to established class groupings.

In this context, and within the fixed resources provided to schools and the physical facilities schedule, class size should be planned on the minimum possible. Provided that class sizes should be planned generally on the following basis:

- (a) P to 6 - an average of 26 provided that the average class size of 21 at P-2 is maintained;
- (b) 7 to 12 – groups of up to 25 students.
- (c) Schools should plan for the minimum practical class sizes possible given available resources. Practical class sizes should be determined having regard to the nature of the activities, the nature of the equipment used, the maturity and competence of the students and the capabilities of the teacher to provide expert supervision. A practical class includes a subject or course where the use of equipment and/or material of a potentially dangerous nature is involved and/or a class in which students are undertaking manual or other tasks requiring greater individual supervision of the classroom activity.
- (d) Schools should plan for the minimum ESL class sizes possible given available resources, the educational needs of the students and the total teaching program.

In determining class sizes, staff or the union sub branch may provide the principal with alternatives and, following consultation, staff or the union sub branch may request that the principal provide reasons in circumstances where class sizes are determined in excess of the planning guidance set out above.

Voluntary/discretionary effort

Teachers, as professionals, contribute more than their required duties by participating in school camps, the conduct of concerts, after-school sport etc. This occurs within the context of the whole school year. Each principal should, as far as possible, ensure that discretionary effort is recognised and encourage the sharing of voluntary activities among staff.

Graduate teachers

The primary focus of the graduate teacher is on further developing skills and competencies needed to become an effective classroom practitioner. Ongoing support and development of graduate teachers is critical for the teachers themselves, the schools in which they teach, the communities in which they play a significant role, and for the students whose futures they shape.

The work allocated to a graduate teacher in their first 12 months of teaching should recognise the need for the graduate teacher to perform all of her or his required duties within a reasonable timeframe and to participate in the necessary induction and development activities designed to assist graduate teachers in their first 12 months. Accordingly, within the resources available to the school, the scheduled duties of a graduate teacher should be reduced by at least 5% over the school week consistent with the allocation of duties at the school level.

Graduate mentors

If a teacher is requested to act as mentor for a graduate teacher the principal should ensure that this role can be undertaken having regard to the total work required of that teacher over the 38 hour week.

TEACHER WORKLOAD GRIEVANCES

Every effort must be made to resolve teacher workload grievances through conciliation at the school level. The key principle is local resolution and minimization of grievances.

A teacher who considers his or her workload to be excessive or unreasonable within the terms of the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008* may, if the matter is not resolved at the school, refer the matter to the union who may refer the matter for resolution in accordance with the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008*, to examine the factors affecting the work of the teacher to determine whether the work is excessive or unreasonable.

Where a grievance is not resolved the teacher may make application to the Merit Protection Boards for determination or access the grievance procedures of the *Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2008*.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE

For advice or assistance on any matters related to the management of teacher work, principals may contact the Policy and Employee Relations Branch on 9637 2454 or email [HRWeb](#) with any query.