

Frequently Asked Questions Pay and Workload Offer 2020

PAY AND PENSION

Q1. When will I receive my revised salary and arrears?

If INTO and the four other constituent members of the Northern Ireland Teachers Council agree to accept the Pay and Workload offer, the dispute will end. It is expected that the pay award, including arrears, will be paid to teachers in all schools within 2-3 months of this decision being communicated to Management side.

Q2. I am a temporary teacher. Will I receive arrears?

Yes, the pay award applies to all teaching staff, including substitute teachers. You will receive arrears for all periods of substitute teaching from 1 September 2017.

Q3. How much will this deal add to my monthly pay?

In terms of uplift in Pay, each teacher should look at the salary tables provided pages 8, 9 and 10 of the 'Joint Communication agreement between Management and Trade Union side of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee' to work out the effect of accepting this offer on your salary. These are Gross amounts, as we are not aware of the tax bracket that members are in, we cannot provide accurate salary for individual members. We cannot provide accurate net salary calculations. INTO have also provided some examples of the potential effect of an accepted pay offer for members in different roles and at different stages of their career:

https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2019/07/2020_04_8_INT0_WorkloadPayOfferFlyer1.pdf

Q4. How does this deal compare with the one Scottish Teachers were awarded last year and how will our salary compare to teachers in England, Scotland and Wales if the offer is accepted?

The Scottish deal leaves a teacher in Scotland worse off in comparison to a NI teacher if both are at the top of their respective pay spines with no additional Management Allowances. In advance of the 2019-20 pay negotiations, teachers in Scotland will enjoy a more advantageous financial position in comparison with teachers in NI. However, we have not yet negotiated the 2019-2020 pay deal and it is our expectation that negotiations in that year will negate that differential. Unlike the teachers in Northern Ireland the Scottish teachers will not have the opportunity for further negotiations until at least 2022. This offer, if accepted will leave teachers in NI being paid more than their Scottish and English/Welsh (outside London) counterparts for the period we have been negotiating for – plus this deal includes workload benefits.

Q5. I retired from teaching since 1 September 2017. Will I receive any arrears, and will there be any impact on my pension?

Yes, teaching staff who have retired since 1 September 2017 will receive their arrears of salary. Your pension and lump sum will be recalculated on the basis of your revised salary points and you will receive payment of these arrears also.

Q6. I work at the Education Authority under teachers' terms and conditions. Will I receive the pay award and other benefits of the agreement if it is accepted by the NITC?

Yes. All teachers who were working under teacher's terms and conditions during the period covered by the pay award will receive all back pay and workload benefits were applicable, due to them under the terms of this agreement.

Q7. I left the teaching profession since 1 September 2017. Will I receive any arrears?

Yes, teaching staff (including substitute teachers) who have left the profession since 1 September 2017 will receive payment of arrears, calculated in terms of payment received to the date of leaving teaching.

Q8. Can I expect a further pay award for 2019/20?

INTO, through the NITC, will submit a pay claim on behalf of members for 2019/20 immediately the offer for 2017/18 and 2018/19 is concluded.

Q9. How will my pension be affected by the proposed pay deal?

If INTO members vote in favour of the pay and workload offer, all additional salary, including back pay, will be pensionable, therefore the short answer is that the value of pensions will be increased in these circumstances. In order to get a personalised overview of your pension, all INTO members are invited to attend the regular Pre-Retirement Seminars and avail of financial advice from Platinum Finance after having done so. Details of these are available on the INTO NI Website. Pensions are an increasingly complex area, particularly due to the Career Average Pension Scheme that most teachers are now a part of. However, any uplift in salary will increase the value of your pension.

Q10. What are the current employee contribution rates for the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pension Scheme?

The employee salary bands for contribution rates for the period 01 April 2020 - 31 March 2021 are set out in DE Circular 2020/01 which is available here:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-202001-changes-salary-bands-contribution-rates-members-ni-teachers-pension-scheme-nitps>

Q11. What employee contribution rate is applied to the payment of arrears?

The appropriate employer pension contribution rate to be applied to the payment of arrears is the rate applicable to the current pay period i.e. the month in which payment is made, irrespective of the period to which the arrears apply.

Q12. Will the arrears payment affect the rate of contributions that I pay?

No, where arrears payments (e.g. back-dated pay awards) are made, the annual salary rate for the month of payment is calculated excluding the back-dated pay award, in order to determine the correct contribution rate which is then applied to all pensionable earnings in the month i.e. both salary and back-dated pay awards.

Q13. Will the increase in my rate of salary result in a higher employee contribution rate?

The contribution rate a member pays, as set out in DE Circular 2020/01, is determined by their actual pensionable earnings based on a tiered system.

Q14. Will the tax taken from my back pay be an average tax from the previous years that the pay is backdated for?

Simply the answer here is no. Income tax is calculated on a yearly basis and the tax deduction is a percentage of all earnings for each individual financial tax year. Even though the earnings are backpay, the tax will be from the fiscal year when the backpay is paid.

WORKLOAD

Q15. What immediate safeguards will there be around limiting my workload?

For all staff, meetings will be scheduled at the beginning of the school year, published for the academic year and accommodated within Directed Time budgets. Meetings will be limited to one per week for a maximum of one hour. A clear agenda should be provided in advance.

Also, all new system initiatives must be consulted on and workload assessed through an agreed framework. All new internal school initiatives must be related to the School Development Plan and properly resourced and funded. Refer also to question 16.

For teachers, 10% of Directed Time budget will be allowed for Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA). This means that 126.5 hours of a teachers 1265 hours must be given over to PPA.

SENCOS will be provided with dedicated time to meet the requirements of their role, proportionate and appropriate to the needs of the pupils in the school.

For principals and vice principals and there will be a review on the workload impact on school leaders with a view to easing workloads. Refer also question 17.

Q16. How will the outcome of the reviews be decided/ who will determine if changes are acceptable to INTO and the NITC and when will changes be implemented?

Each review will be populated by members from both Management and Trade Union side. Progress that is made, as with the current Pay offer, will be brought back to Northern Committee for consideration to allow our representative on the review to bring a collective voice to the review. Any further changes/ gains resulting from the reviews will be put before Northern Committee for agreement. They will also be subject to the normal negotiating mechanisms of the NITC and will require the support of four of the five Teaching Unions before they can take effect.

It is anticipated that the reviews may take eighteen months to complete, however, this will be dependent on how quickly agreement can be reached by both sides.

Q17. How will new initiatives be determined and either accepted or rejected at system and school level?

New initiatives come from two sources, system level and school level.

At system Level, an agreed framework, between Management and trade Union side, will be put in place to consult on and workload assess all new initiatives and proposals which may increase teachers' workload. Changes would be agreed through the agreed negotiating mechanisms.

At school level this may take place through the Joint Consultative Committees or through negotiations in schools between Union Reps and school Management. Any changes at this level should be reflective of the agreed three-year School Development Plan. School based trade union representatives should refer to their local Northern Committee representative or Northern Office for any advice in relation to new initiatives.

Q18. What is contingency time?

Contingency time is the time left following the allocation of Directed Time commitment. It is recommended that each teacher's time budget includes an element of contingency time to ensure there is flexibility to accommodate situations that may arise and are unaccounted for within the time budget.

Q19. As a principal/ administrative principal how does this protect me from additional workload and how does the deal reduce my workload?

INTO has been aware that the terms and conditions for Principal and Vice principal members vary significantly from other teachers with regard to directed time. To address the issues in relation to workload of principals and vice principals would not have been possible through the negotiation. For this reason, one of the nine agreed areas of review flowing from acceptance of the offer is a review of workload impact on school leaders.

Management Side/ NITC will review workloads falling to School Principals, Vice-Principals and other Senior Leaders. It is proposed that an initial phase of the review should be conducted to examine current practices and the impact on the workload of Principals and Vice Principals. It is important that the day to day workloads of Principals and Vice Principals are properly balanced as to ensure they can continue to fully support all staff and pupils in their schools.

This will be one of the reviews prioritised once the offer has been accepted.

The reduction in workload for teachers for which Principal members have oversight responsibilities, the agreement on new initiatives and the transition period will also represent an immediate reduction in principal workload.

Q20. How will the 10% guaranteed Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) time be implemented?

As part of the wider implications of the deal, PPA is considered a given by both management and trade union sides. However, rather than a teacher simply struggling to timetable PPA time into their day, it will be included in a teacher's time-budget. Here PPA will be entered as being to the value of 126 ½ hours. Principals will need to be extremely mindful when drawing up new time-budgets because this 126 ½ hours will greatly reduce teachers contingency time that was previously available.

Q21. What is Directed Time?

Directed Time means time spent on any activity which the Principal has determined that teacher shall undertake. A teacher shall be available to perform such duties at such times and such places as may reasonably be specified by the Principal. All the time that a teacher has to be on school premises is included in Directed Time.

Q22. What is included in Directed Time?

The 1265 hours per year, which a teacher is required to be available to work is split up into a number of elements:

- a. Class Contact Time

It is acknowledged that the weekly limits of 23.5 hours in a post primary school and 25 hours in a primary or special school will include any time a teacher is involved in class cover.

- b. Supervision – Teaching Staff

Supervision occurs when a teacher is asked to engage in activities outside of the classroom where there is no active teaching taking place. Supervision may include tasks such as morning and afternoon breaks, wet break times, arrangements for the arrival and departure of pupils, bus supervision, school assembly, examinations etc.

Where a teacher is not required to supervise at morning or afternoon break, or where this is done on a rota basis, this period must still be defined as Directed Time.

It is recognised that classroom supervision is not an effective use of a teacher's time. However, in exceptional circumstances, a teacher may be required to supervise, as distinct from teach, the class of an absent colleague.

Unless employed under a separate contract as a mid-day supervisor, a teacher shall not be required to undertake mid-day supervision.

c. Non-Teaching Days

Full-time teachers are required to be available for work on 195 days per year, of which at least 5 are non-teaching days. These 5 days must also be accounted for within the 1265 hours.

d. Teaching Allowance and Special Educational Needs Allowance Duties

Some teachers will be in receipt of Teaching Allowances or Special Educational Needs Allowances for specific duties. These duties must also be allowed for within the time budget of 1265 hours.

e. Other Professional Duties

There is a range of other professional activities that go on regularly within schools. If a teacher is expected to carry out any duty that is deemed reasonable and in balance with the duties allocated to colleagues, then it must also be accounted for in the time budget. Due attention must be paid to ensure that there is work/life balance, in line with the Strategy for Teacher Health and Wellbeing in Northern Ireland (TNC 2011/1), particularly where a teacher volunteers to take on additional duties on an unremunerated basis.

Q23. Who is responsible for determining a teacher's time budget?

The Principal is responsible for determining a time budget for each member of the teaching staff, giving due regard to the individual responsibilities of each teacher. While the spirit of the agreement is that Principals and each member of staff should seek to reach agreement on a teacher's time budget, teachers will not have freedom to decide for themselves how they allocate their time.

Principals will need to plan the use of the 1265 hours carefully. If they do not, there could be a danger that staff will exhaust their obligatory hours before the end of the school year.

Q24. What is the maximum amount of Directed Time for a full-time teacher?

Directed Time for a full-time teacher may not exceed 1265 hours per year nor apply to more than 195 days per year.

Schools have always been dependent on a commitment from teachers beyond the legal minimum requirement. Schools would find it impossible to include within a teacher's 1265 hours all of the time currently given by teachers to such activities as games, drama, music and school trips.

A teacher's Directed Time of 1265 hours per year is the basic legal requirement for a teacher to satisfy their contractual obligations.

Q25. How should Directed Time be applied for a part-time teacher?

Directed Time for a part-time teacher should be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Q26. How should Directed Time be applied for a substitute teacher engaged via NISTR?

A substitute teacher should not be treated less favourably than a comparable permanent teacher.

Q27. When can a teacher be asked to cover or supervise?

In schools of 222 or more pupils:

- when a colleague is absent for one or two days (subject to the maximum class contact limit of 23.5 or 25 hours).
- when covering for a primary 1, 2 or nursery colleague at any time (subject to the maximum class contact limit of 25 hours).
- if it was not known that the absence would exceed 2 days - teachers can cover on the first and second day only (other than for primary 1, 2 or nursery colleagues).

Q28. How many days should a full-time teacher be available to work in one year?

A full-time teacher shall be available for work on 195 days over a period of 12 months commencing on 31 July of which not more than 190 days should involve teaching children in a formal situation. Non-teaching days should, where reasonably possible, be contiguous with teaching days.

The remaining 5 non-contact days are known to many in the education system as 'Baker Days' and are used for training purposes.

Schools may also avail of up to 5 School Development Days (SDDs) for the purpose of school improvement and school/staff development as per the terms of the DE Circular on School Development Days. Depending on the number of SDDs schools avail of, the number of days that pupils are taught in the classroom may vary from 185 to 190 days.

The number of teaching days can be reduced further if a school applies to and receives approval from DE for an 'Exceptional Closure.' Such closures are unforeseen/unplanned and are outside the control of the school authorities.

Q29. How many hours per week is a teacher required to teach in a formal situation?

A teacher may not be required to teach, as distinct from supervise, children in a formal situation for more than 25 hours per week in a primary, nursery and special school and 23.5 hours per week in a post primary school.

Q30. If a teacher is in receipt of a Teaching Allowance, should time to perform these duties be included in the time budget?

Some teachers will be in receipt of Teaching Allowances or Special Educational Needs Allowances for specific duties. These duties must also be allowed for within the time budget of 1265 hours.

Q31. Is attendance on residential trips included in Directed Time?

Principals cannot direct teachers to take pupils on educational visits involving overnight stays. Where this takes place on a voluntary basis, it is a matter of negotiation between the teacher and

the Principal as to the amount of Directed Time which will be allocated to this activity out of the annual time budget.

Q32. Is attendance at School Assembly included in Directed Time?

Yes, attendance at School Assembly is included in Directed Time. Leading an assembly is considered to be class contact time in the time budget. If a teacher is required to deliver learning or pastoral work, this period of time is considered to be class contact time in the time budget.

Q33. Is registration included in Directed Time?

Yes, registration is included in Directed Time. If a teacher is required to deliver learning or pastoral work this period of time is considered to be class contact time in the time budget.

Q34. Is a teacher's participation in extra-curricular activities included in Directed Time?

Schools have always been dependent on a voluntary commitment from teachers beyond the legal minimum requirement. Schools would find it impossible to include within a teacher's 1265 hours all of the time currently given by them for voluntary activities such as games, drama, music and school trips.

Q35. What is a teacher's lunch break entitlement?

All teachers are required to have a break of at least 30 minutes.

Teachers in a Primary, Special or Post Primary School are required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.00pm.

Teachers in Nursery Schools and in Nursery Units in Primary Schools are required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.30pm.

Lunch breaks are unpaid and do not count towards Directed Time.

Teachers are not required to remain on school premises during lunch break.

Q36. Are evening meetings accounted for in directed time?

Yes, evening meetings are included within directed time. Evening meetings should be agreed in time budgets at the start of the school year.

Q37. Can I claim for travel to evening meetings?

Yes, where an employee makes a second journey of the day to their permanent place of work, the employee is entitled to be paid mileage from home to their permanent place of work. This will be paid at NI Civil Service rates. Expenses forms for teachers working in maintained and controlled schools are available from the Accounts Department within the Education Authority.

ETI

Q38. What progress has been made with the ETI and will schools which took part in industrial action be targeted?

While it must be remembered that the ETI have a statutory duty to inspect, improvement in this area can be viewed as immediate and longer term. In regard to short term progress, this deal includes cast-iron assurances from the ETI that they will not target schools who participated in industrial action nor will the number of inspections increase. The industrial action boycott of the ETI

will have no bearing on their future timetable of visits. It is expected that a normal cycle of inspections will resume if an agreement is reached. Logistically the ETI could not return to all schools that took part in industrial action next year; they simply do not have enough inspectors to do so.

Inspectors would like to engage in non-inspection visits where they will meet the principal and a staff representative and District inspectors would also like to introduce themselves through school visits in their locality.

Also, rather than just providing the name of the Lead Inspector, ETI have given a commitment to provide the names of all the inspection team, including any Associate assessor, who will be a serving practitioner. Consideration is also being given to the publishing of biographies of all visiting inspectors.

Q39. Do INTO anticipate making further progress with ETI and how and when will this happen if so?

The Education Minister has made his intention clear in relation to how he views the role of the Education and Training inspectorate. He announced his preferred option, both to the Stormont Education Committee and at the INTO Northern Conference last month. He wishes to see a move to a lighter touch model of inspection. The Minister has recognised that relationships between the teaching profession and the ETI needed to be renewed and improved. Coupled with a change in leadership at the ETI, INTO is confident of improvement and further gains in relation to the ETI. This will be included in the Review of the Accountability Framework.

INTO are hopeful that, post-review, inspections will not be the generator of both anxiety and additional workload. All stakeholders within education agree that there needs to be a level of accountability but that this should be complementary to the day to day work that teachers are engaged in. To ensure that INTO's views are considered the ETI has, within this deal, given a clear commitment to engaging with INTO to ensure openness and transparency and are on record in welcoming discussions with the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council on inspection related matters. These meetings had, before the COVID crisis, been attended by both the ETI and the trade unions to agree on 'best practice' accountability. The ETI has continued to work on the perception and reality (myth busting) document which will clarify the documentation required by an inspection team with a view to reducing workload.

INTO negotiators will represent the views of members on this as the situation develops and press for a practical return to inspections which take into account the unique challenges and context of the global pandemic.

Q40. My school didn't cooperate with the ETI during the Industrial Action. Will they be in my school as soon as the action ends?

Union side has assurances from Management side that no school will be selected for Inspection on the basis of their engagement in the boycott of ETI which was part of our Industrial Action. It is expected that a normal cycle of inspections will resume if an agreement is reached and Industrial Action ends. The COVID-19 situation may also impact on the matter of when the cycle of inspections resumes. INTO negotiators will represent the views of members on this as the situation develops and press for a practical return to inspections which take into account the unique challenges and context of the global pandemic.

Q41. Will Coordinators for Literacy, Numeracy, World Around Us, ICT etc have to produce evidence of work completed, evaluations etc during the period of Industrial Action for my Principal, Board of Governors or ETI? What about class teachers?

As part of the deal, INTO have insisted that there will not be any expectation from the school that work, embargoed because of industrial action, will suddenly be required from teachers with managerial points. This would only increase both teacher and Principal workload. Also, as part of the transition arrangements at bullet point 7, there is a recognition that future inspections will take account of the industrial action especially in relation to the evaluation of school improvement by leadership and management. The COVID-19 situation is also likely to impact on what it will be reasonable for members to produce for ETI in relation to their responsibilities as teachers and post holders.

Miscellaneous

Q42. I am a teacher on UPS3. If we come off action before the end of the school year will I be expected to participate in PRSD in this school year?

Realistically, attempting to complete PRSD Targets and appraisals in such a short period of time would not be in keeping with either the spirit or the purpose of the process. Ideally schools should waive any expectation that PRSD be completed between now and the end of the school year and instead be encouraged to introduce renewed consultations at the beginning of the new school year so that meaningful targets can be agreed by both the reviewer and reviewee at the beginning of a new cycle. Teachers requiring successful engagement with PRSD for UPS progression should continue as normal.

Q43. Why has this offer been put out to INTO members now during the COVID-19 situation? Can we delay the deal?

The offer has been put to NITC by management side on an agreed timeline which would have been adhered to if Covid-19 hadn't taken over events. INTO shares members concerns about the timing but we have been left with no option but to put this offer to members at this time. The offer was agreed in principle since June 2019 and has been with the Department of Finance for authorisation of funding. All substantive negotiation was complete prior to the outbreak of COVID-19. As of Wednesday 8th April 2020, an offer has been made by management side. If this offer is delayed, then the funds allocated for payment of the deal will be withdrawn. Teachers may recollect the funds sent back to the UK Treasury by the current Education Minister in previous years.

Q44. What will happen to the 'Transition Period' referenced in the deal, given the COVID-19 situation and the uncertainty around when we might be able to return to normal working in schools?

As things currently stand no-one knows when schools may reopen. However, INTO are in ongoing discussions with management side to emphasise the need to facilitate the agreed 3-month transition period whenever that might be.

Q45 When will the INTO poll on this offer take place?

The INTO poll will open on Monday 20 April at 12 noon and close on Wednesday 22 April at 5pm.

The result will be published as soon as practicable after the close of the poll. Please check the INTO website for updates.

Q46. What effect will the pay increases have on school budgets?

The pay increases, should they be accepted, are fully funded by additional money provided to DENI by the Department of Finance and will have no detrimental impact on school budgets.