

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Discover the answers to your burning questions about the latest pay awards and workload agreements for teachers in Northern Ireland with this comprehensive FAQ guide.

Q1. Who decided this pay award for teachers?

Teachers' pay awards are agreed through collective bargaining at the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC) which comprises representatives from the teachers' employers, sectoral interests, Department of Education and the five recognised teachers' unions – INTO, NAHT, NASUWT, NEU and UTU.

Q2. What are the terms of the agreement?

The headline agreement is based on an increase of 1% in September 2021, 5% in September 2022 and a increase of 4.1% plus consolidated £1,000 in September 2023.

The £1000 is not separate from your pay but forms part of the formula to set your new pay scale.

However, an additional increase has been applied to the bottom of the Main Pay Scale to bring the starting salary to £30,000.

Teachers on Main Pay Scale M1 at September 2022 will be assimilated on to the Main Pay Scale point M2 of the 2023 Main Pay Scale.

Teachers on Main Pay Scale M2 or above at September 2022 will follow normal pay progression arrangements.

Q3. Why is the award for 2021/22 only 1%?

The pay award for 2021/22 was subject to the Northern Ireland Public Sector Pay Policy set by the Northern Ireland Executive for 2021/22. This placed a limit on locally determined pay awards in that year of up to 1% in addition to any legally entitled progression increases. All public-sector pay awards must be affordable and are subject to approval from Department of Finance (DoF).

Q4. Is the consolidated £1,000 payment a one-off or will it be carried over into future years?

The consolidated £1,000 payment will be applied to all teacher salary scale points from M3 upwards with effect from 1 September 2023 and it will be carried over into future years.

Q5. When will I receive my revised salary and arrears?

It is expected that following agreement the pay award, will be paid to teachers **in all schools within 2-3 months**. The upgrade to revised pay points will take place in May or June 2024. Following the recent launch of EA One teachers' payroll, the application of arrears, which must be calculated on the former payroll system, will be paid over the summer months.

Q6. I am a temporary / supply teacher. Will I receive arrears?

Yes, the pay award applies to all teaching staff, including supply teachers. You will receive arrears for all periods of substitute teaching from 1 September 2021. The £1000 is pro-rata to your actual days worked from September 2023.

Q7. I retired from teaching since 1 September 2021. Will I receive any arrears, and will there be any impact on my pension?

Yes, teaching staff who have retired will receive arrears based on salary received from September 2021 to the date of their retirement. 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.

Q8. I left the teaching profession since 1 September 2021. Will I receive any arrears?

Yes, teaching staff (including supply teachers) who have left the profession since 1 September 2021 will receive payment of arrears pertaining to salary received.

Q9. What about payments of arrears to part time workers, job shares etc.?

If the proposed agreement is accepted, pay adjustments will be delivered through revised pay scales. Part-time workers and others who don't work full time hours will get pro-rata adjustments based on the number of hours they work. There may be a delay in payment to these workers as they will require additional calculations to be made within the DE Payroll section.

Q10. Will I receive the full back pay if I was off on maternity for part of the time covered?

A pay rise must not be withheld because of maternity leave.

The employer must recalculate the average weekly earnings (AWE) to take account of pay rises awarded, or that would have been awarded had the employee not been on maternity leave.

This applies if the pay rise was effective from anytime between the start of the 8 week relevant period for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and the end of the statutory maternity leave.

Q11. Will the back pay be taxed?

Yes all additional earnings covered within this agreement will be subject to tax. Each persons individual taxation circumstances will be considered and adjustments will be made at source and communicated by DE to HMRC for tax calculations.

NI Teachers' Pension Scheme – Employee Contributions

Q12. What are the current employee contribution rates?

The employee salary bands for contribution rates for the period **April 2020 - 31 March 2021** are set out in [DE Circular 2024/02](#) which is available here.

Q13. 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.

Q14. 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.

Q15. 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 2024/03](#), is determined by their actual pensionable earnings based on a tiered system.

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Action Short of Strike

Q16. How will ending ASOS impact on teacher workload?

The time budgets in place for each teacher will be the mechanism for managing the expected workload for all teachers. All tasks and duties including those within the expectation of an additional role within school should be accounted for in your time budget.

You cannot be expected to work beyond your contractual hours of **1265** per year. As per the 2020 Pay and Workload Agreement all new initiatives must be workload proofed and agreed with Teacher Unions.

In the existing ASoS directives are 18 instructions which you should not be doing anyway as they sit outside of your contractual duties.

If this pay agreement is accepted there will be additional information provided to teachers and school leaders to manage the transition off action and resuming an agreed working pattern for the remainder of this school year. Teachers will need to familiarise themselves with these details as they move off action.

There will be an expectation that schools will begin to forward plan for the revision and consultation of time budgets for the next academic year. A joint union training event will be available in the Summer term,

Directed Time Budgets (DTBs) Recap webinar - Wednesday 12 June 2024

Q17. Will there be inspections in final term if ASOS stops?

In February 2024, ETI published 'An update on the work of ETI: February 2024 – June 2024' which includes 'Follow-up inspections for a proportion of organisations in ETI's follow-up inspection process' and 'Development of Inspection, including pilot inspections', taking place across early years, work-based learning and youth phases.'

ETI have informed the NITC that they have no plans to change this work schedule up to the end of June if the pay deal goes through and industrial action ends, other than to extend the pilot inspections to a number of schools who wish to be added to the pilot.

Q18. What else is being done to address workload?

The 8 completed workforce reviews address a huge level of issues for teachers and school leaders which impact directly on workload, health and wellbeing. The recommendations were agreed between management and trade unions. It is agreed by management side to agree a framework to address the implementation of the recommendations contained within these reviews by 31 May 2024.

The revised TNC Workload Agreement effective from 1 August 2024 forms part of this work.

Workload

Q19. Is there a revised workload agreement?

Yes, there is a revised workload agreement which, once ratified on 26 March 2024 by the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC), will replace TNC 2011/8 from 1 August 2024.

Full details of the revised workload agreement will be available once ratified by TNC. The general intent is to ensure that the workload of all Principals, Vice Principals and Teachers is managed fairly and consistently to ensure that all teaching professionals can discharge their roles and responsibilities effectively for the benefit of the teaching and learning of pupils.

Key to this is the continued implementation of time budgets for all teachers in consultation with school leaders.

Q20. What are the working time regulations?

The Working Time Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 cover the following main areas:

- Minimum daily and weekly rest periods;
- Rest breaks;
- Paid annual holiday;
- Limits on the average number of hours which can be worked in one week;
- Restrictions on hours worked at night.

Working Time Regulations provide minimum standards of employment and good employers may improve on these minimum standards. The revised workload agreement will also affirm that, in circumstances where the precise monitoring of working time is difficult, the spirit of the Regulations will nevertheless apply.

Q21. Do I have to respond outside normal school operating hours?

Schools are not expected to respond outside of normal operating hours and schools should notify parents of these hours.

What happens next?

Q22. When can members' have their say on this agreement?

Each member union is issuing links to member surveys which can be accessed from **Thursday 14th March at 9am until Wednesday 20th March at 5pm.**

Members should check inboxes for the links which will be sent directly to them using contact details currently held at each of the union offices. If you think you have not been receiving communications or have been using a new email address please contact their respective union offices about this as soon as possible. Please also check your junk mail box in case your email and link have landed there.

Q23. When will we know if the proposed agreement will be implemented?

On 26 March 2024, the Survey outcome from each union will be reported to a meeting of the TNC. All five member unions of the NITC need to accept this award to ensure implementation. Results will be communicated on each member union website.

Q24. Can I expect a further pay award for 2024/25?

The NITC will as a collective submit a pay claim on behalf of the members of all the teachers unions for 2024/25 immediately after the offer for 2021, 2022, 2023 is concluded.

This would be the normal practice for NITC each year.